FOCUS ON B.C.'S LEARNING CURVE, PGS 19-26

Celebrity Buzz

Oprah tells Rihanna to heal first
pg 30

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VANCOUVER 2010 **Games**

Racecourse must close for Olympics

SECURITY More than 200 workers at Hastings Racecourse will temporarily lose their jobs when the 2010 Olympic Games begin in February.

VANOC is forcing the facility to shut down because it sits in a restricted security area by the Pacific Coliseum.

Racecourse general manager Raj Mutti said he wanted the track to remain open to take advantage of the business opportunities from the Games.

The employees will be without work from Feb. 1 to March 2, 2010.

METRO VANCOUVER

Your Money pg 12
Smart Cookies and child care

Riding the Recession

Now through the end of March, Metro will share advice on how to cut down on expenses and navigate your way through the recession.

Health
- **How to deal with recession stress without pulling your hair out, pg 27**

Tomorrow
- **Put the brakes on car maintenance costs and keep the mechanic away.**

Later this week
- **Meals for a steal.**

Please recycle

Canadians not sharing Oval ice: Competitors

International teams claim access limited

RAFE ARNOTT/METRO VANCOUVER

Canada finds itself in a strange position in the international speedskating community entering the most important event of the season — wearing the black hat.

VANCOUVER 2010 **Games**

A lot of bad blood has been created by a series of recent incidents where top international skaters had trouble gaining access to the Richmond Olympic Oval, the official site for the 2010 Winter Games, in advance of this week's world single distances speedskating championships.

Kevin Crockett, a former Canadian Olympic medallist who now coaches for China, was escorted out of the building along with his athletes, including world champion Beixing Wang. Dutch Olympic champion Bob de Jong was kept out of the building for a full day before finally being allowed on the ice. And the Germans couldn't get in at all.

Crockett puts the blame squarely on Speed Skating Canada and its program director Finn Halvorsen, saying they're going overboard in trying to secure a home-ice advantage for the Olympics.

> **"The Canadians are acting like this is their fort, like this is a fort that's being intruded upon."**
> Kevin Crockett, former Canadian Olympic medallist

"The Canadians are acting like this is their fort, like this is a fort that's being intruded upon," he said. "The Canadian athletes have kind of inherited this (crappy) attitude. They all believe they actually have an advantage and, in the meantime, they're not acting like Canadians. There's no fairness, there's no fair play here, there's nothing like that."

The Germans say they asked permission to train at the Oval before last weekend's World Cup final in Salt Lake City, but never got a reply.

"We were there for three days and the only thing I could do was peek through the windows to look at the venue," German coach Bart Schouten told Dutch journalist Gerard den Elt of AD Sportwereld.

De Jong, the defending Olympic champion in the men's 10,000 metres, was similarly stymied when he first arrived in Richmond last Tuesday. He tried to sneak in for four hours, to no avail. The next day, Oval officials allowed him on the ice for two hours.

But there was an unpleasant incident when Halvorsen arrived at the Oval and found de Jong in the Canadian team dressing room, chatting with Canadian coach Ingrid Paul. Halvorsen, a Norwegian who took over the Canadian program three years ago, said reports there was a shouting match are "extremely exaggerated," that he simply made it clear to the Dutchman that the Canadian locker room was out of bounds.

Told that de Jong was apparently invited into the room by Paul, Halvorsen replied: "If she had, then she stepped over her boundaries."

Magnus Enfeldt, the sport and venue planning manager for VANOC, said part of the problem is that VANOC does not have full control of the Oval until December. The City of Richmond, which footed most of the bill, is in charge and it's used as a recreational facility by the community.

Enfeldt said that the matter will be discussed today at a team leaders meeting.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

ALEXANDER HASSENSTEIN/GETTY IMAGES

A member of Canada's women's team, left. Dutch champion Bob de Jong, right.

Communication

- Brian Rahill, high performance and Olympic program director for Speed Skating Canada, said there is plenty of access for international skaters at the Oval, but that's never been properly communicated. He said under a policy announced at an ISU congress last summer international skaters get their own session in the morning and can skate at the same time as the Canadians in the afternoon.

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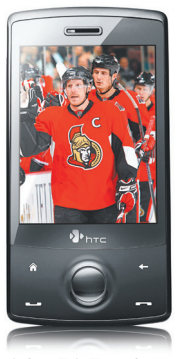

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Vancouver date on the horizon for U2
U2 is performing in Vancouver this fall. The band will play BC Place on Oct. 28, to promote their 12th album, No Line On The Horizon. A date for ticket sales hasn't been announced. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Local

Viva la Coldplay!

Coldplay has announced a Vancouver date as part of their North American tour. The Grammy Award-winning British rockers, who are fronted by lead singer Chris Martin, left, will be at GM Place on June 20. Tickets go on sale on Saturday at 10 a.m. METRO VANCOUVER

Plan may brake cabbies: Firm

KRISTEN THOMPSON
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The city's plan to add 116 more taxis to Vancouver's streets could destitute current drivers, who are already struggling for fares given the economic downturn, says one local cab company.

"Our business is down about 25 to 30 per cent," Carolyn Bauer, general manager of Black Top and Checker Cabs, told Metro yesterday. "I've never seen it this bad."

Bauer said she has signatures from more than 400 taxi drivers who oppose the city's plan to expand the fleets by 116 cars, which she said was made before the economy turned bad.

She said it costs drivers about $120 per 12-hour shift to cover maintenance, fuel and licensing costs, and many of them are now making below minimum wage.

KRISTEN THOMPSON / METRO VANCOUVER

Sukhi Kandola, a taxi driver for Black Top and Checker Cabs, waits for fares outside the company's downtown Vancouver headquarters yesterday.

Dave Chami, a driver with Blacktop and Checker Cabs, said night drivers say they're getting half as much business as usual.

"It could be frustrating to younger and novice drivers … but I know the reason (for the slow business) and can see that eventually things will turn around," he said.

But George Higgins, a spokesperson for MacLure's Cabs, said that company and Vancouver Taxi have put in a request with the Passenger Transportation Board (PTB) for 30 more vehicles each.

"MacLure's believes there is a market for 30 more taxi licences," he said. "Almost any person you'd talk to on the street would say they'd appreciate more."

Coun. Suzanne Anton said the decision, which will be made in the spring, is up to the city.

Filming in province up $250M from 2007

SAM SMITH
for Metro Vancouver

Good news. Shootings have gone up in Vancouver, and no, they're not the gang-related type.

Film and television spending in B.C. went up more than $250 million in 2008 compared to the year before.

Movies such as The Day The Earth Stood Still, X-Files and TV shows such as Supernatural and Smallville were among the productions shot here.

Bill Bennett, minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, said the 30 per cent increase is due to hard work.

"Even in these challenging economic times, the work we've put into strengthening B.C.'s economy means that motion picture production will continue to grow and thrive," Bennett said.

The majority of the increase is in foreign films, which spent $841 million of the $1.2-billion total.

David Paperny, president of Paperny Films, said the province's ability to evolve is what makes it work.

"The film and television industry is changing at a phenomenal pace," Paperny said. "The ability of B.C. companies to respond quickly and adapt to both economic and technological change are the defining characteristics of our industry."

Still active

- B.C. remains the third-largest film and television service production in North America, behind Los Angeles and New York.

News in brief

POWER B.C. Hydro is developing guidelines for the infrastructure needed to charge electric vehicles at homes and businesses. Forecasts suggest that 10 to 60 per cent of new cars purchased by 2025 will be electric vehicles. The guidelines will streamline consumer adoption of the vehicles, said Bob Elton, head of B.C. Hydro.

AVALANCHE The two Calgary men killed in an avalanche at the Kicking Horse Mountain Resort near Golden have been identified as Sheilesh Davé and Hima Maher, CBC News Online reports. The victims had hiked to a closed area of the resort and triggered an avalanche.

DEATH The lawyer for a woman imprisoned for her role in the beating death of 16-year-old Matthew Martins in Surrey called for her acquittal yesterday. Jim Millar said some of the witnesses in the attack were drunk at the time, and Katherine Quinn's conviction should thereby be overturned.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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What's online today.

Video Ceremony for latest soldier killed in Afghanistan at **metronews.ca/canada**
Comment Allan Small's tips on how investors can bide their time **metronews.ca/investing**

Man injured in Kingsway shooting

INJURIES A man in his 30s is recovering in hospital following an early morning shooting outside a Kingsway restaurant early yesterday morning.

The shooting occurred at 2:30 a.m. in the 2500 block of Kingsway. Bloody snow and tissues could be seen on the sidewalk outside the Ohukuya Japanese Restaurant.

Police found the injured man lying on the ground and transported him to hospital where he underwent surgery for non-life threatening injuries.

Investigators closed Kingsway between Slocan and Earles Street for several hours, reopening the road around 7:30 a.m.

Police did not say whether the shooting was targeted or gang-related. There have been more than 30 shootings in and around the Lower Mainland since the beginning of the year. JEFF HODSON/ METRO VANCOUVER

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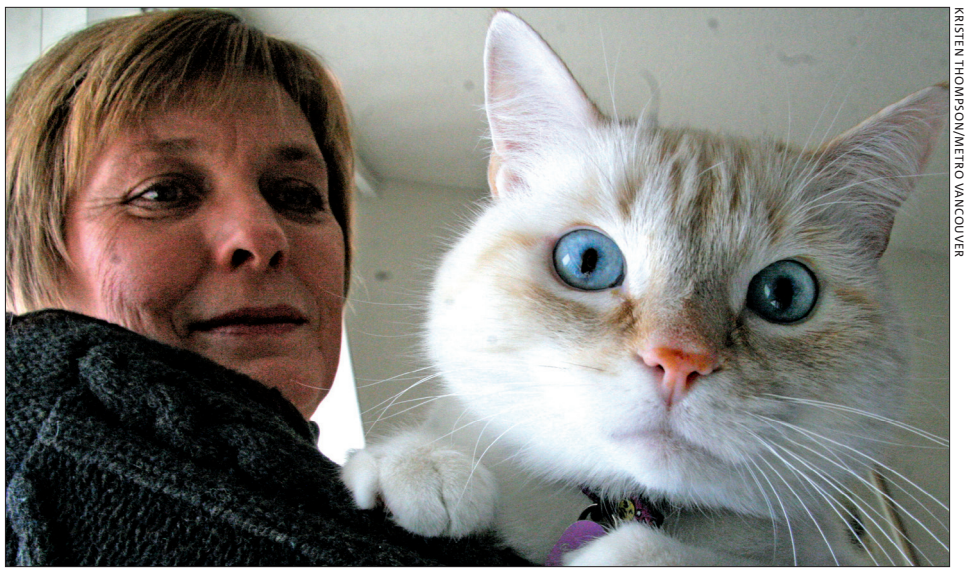
Juno where to go?
An orientation for the hundreds of people volunteering at the 2009 Juno Awards is being held Saturday. The event will take place at 10 a.m. at St. Andrew Wesley church on Nelson Street. METRO VANCOUVER


KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Barbara Milligan holds her mother's cat, Niko, in her west-end apartment yesterday. The B.C. Tenancy Board has determined that Milligan's elderly mother, Mary, can't be evicted for owning a pet.

Pet owners stay put

Board rules landlords can't evict because of animals

KRISTEN THOMPSON
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Mary Milligan no longer has to choose between her beloved cat, Niko, and her home after the B.C. Tenancy Board ruled her landlord can't evict her for having a pet.

The west-end resident, along with a half dozen neighbours at Emerald Terrace apartment, said they were told by Hollyburn Properties in December to give up their feline companions or find a new home.

"You can't believe the relief," Milligan said yesterday, of learning she can stay. "I was thinking, 'Where am I going to go?'"

Some residents claim the eviction notices were an attempt to oust long-time tenants, many of whom are elderly, so rents could be increased.

Andrew Simmons, a seven-year resident of the building who has three cats, said it helped to have strength in numbers.

"There are a lot of individuals who face the same situation, who don't have the support we had. Most people would find it easier to move … It's important for people to see that we can fight things like this.

Rebeka Breder, a lawyer with Boughton Law Corporation who served as council for the tenants, said the win sends a message that pets are "important members of our family and provide comfort."

Unusual snow, cold slows morning rush

TARYN MCELHERAN
for Metro Vancouver

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

William Lee plays fetch with his border collie Hudson in the snow at John Hendry Park in East Vancouver yesterday.

WEATHER The morning commute was chaos yesterday as the heavy — and late — snowfall made roads slippery.

"This much snow is unusual (in March)," said John McIntyre, a meteorologist for Environment Canada.

"On a 30-year average it shows about three centimetres in March and we've had well over that."

Derek Zabel, spokesperson for Coast Mountain Bus Company, said officials are on alert as forecasters call for freezing temperatures overnight for the next few days.

"If there is going to be freezing temperatures the worry is that there could be the potential for black ice and frozen parts of the roads," he said.

Shelters get three-month extension

JEFF HODSON
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HOMELESS B.C. will fund Vancouver's five low-barrier emergency shelters for another three months, city councillors said yesterday.

Between 450 and 500 people make use of the shelters, some of which allow pets and shopping carts.

The funding amount is being finalized, but should be around $1.5 million, said Vision Coun. Kerry Jang.

The shelters, which opened in December, have made it easier for outreach workers to connect with homeless people, Jang said.

Stats from the Vancouver Police Department show a 27 per cent decrease in the number of mental health and street disorder complaints since the opening of the shelters.

Similarly, Jang added, Downtown Ambassadors have noticed a drop in aggressive panhandling.

Lung cancer on worker's comp.

FIREFIGHTING Lung cancer is being added to the list of occupational diseases that are covered under workers compensation for firefighters.

Labour Minister Iain Black said firefighters are exposed to toxic fumes that may lead to cancer.

The province's amendment will apply to non-smoking firefighters only. JEFF HODSON /METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

COURTS Nina Rivet, the sister of a pedestrian killed in a street race, said she had an emotional breakdown after hearing the Supreme Court ruled one of her killers can be deported, news1130.com reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Patient accused of starting fire

HOSPITAL A weekend fire at Abbotsford Regional Hospital was started by a patient who allegedly took a lighter and burned through her oxygen tube, according to a fire prevention officer.

Steve Oldroyd said Saturday's fire caused minimum damage, "We're not sure why they did it. Fortunately, there was an alert employee who was able to put the fire out and evacuate the room."

The employee supposedly caught the woman lighting the fire and used an extinguisher to douse the flames long enough to turn off the oxygen.

The employee was treated for smoke inhalation later. SAM SMITH /FOR METRO VANCOUVER

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Closing arguments heard in Dagenais trial

Who fired the first shot is a key question facing jurors in the trial of Curt Dagenais, charged with first-degree murder in the deaths of two RCMP constables in rural Saskatchewan nearly three years ago. The panel of six men and six women heard closing arguments yesterday in the Court of Queen's Bench in Saskatoon. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada

Facebook photos lead to arrest

RCMP in Selkirk, Man., have arrested an 18-year-old man who they say documented his graffiti spree on Facebook. The graffiti started to appear last summer and photographs were posted on the popular social networking site, RCMP said yesterday. Police are not identifying the suspect because he was a youth at the time the graffiti was created.

CBC NEWS ONLINE

Avalanche deaths predictable

Experts say conditions just right for increased number of deadly snowslides

Keith Grasdal knows snow.

Three decades of snowmobiling in the east Kootenay region of B.C. have taught him the only certainty about avalanches is the direction they come down.

"If you're in the wrong spot at the wrong time, it's just one of those things," said Grasdal yesterday. "Most times you're OK. Sometimes, it's not."

It has been a rough year for avalanches, especially in southeastern B.C., where two Calgary skiers died over the weekend after an accident in a permanently closed avalanche spot near the Kicking Horse Resort in Golden.

"You live in the mountains and avalanches come down. That's just what happens."
Keith Grasdal, snowmobiler

Grasdal, a member of the Cranbrook Snowmobile Club, said this season there was early snowfall and now there's soft, sugary snow underneath a layer of crust with colder-than-normal temperatures keeping the snow, especially in the backcountry, unstable.

In December, eight snowmobilers died after three avalanches swept 11 men off their machines. Grasdal, who has caused minor avalanches, but considers himself lucky never to have been caught in one, said no one ever forgets about the risks.

"You live in the mountains and avalanches come down. That's just what happens."

This season already there have been 18 deaths associated with avalanches in the area; over the past 10 years, the average has been 14 fatalities.

University of Calgary avalanche researcher Bruce Jamieson said there was less snowfall this year than normal and with less snow, the number of avalanche fatalities were predictable.

"When we see a thinner-than-average snow pack, we get more weak layers in the snow and those are more often triggerable by skiers and snowmobilers and snowboarders," said Jamieson. "When we saw the shallow snow pack and the cold temperatures in December, we knew it was likely to be one of the winters where there was an above number of recreational fatalities."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MacKay to get backing from U.S. for NATO post: Report

NATO Defence Minister Peter MacKay, pressed about media reports that he could be in the running for the job of NATO Secretary-General, said yesterday that nationality should not be a bar for the post, but shied away from saying he was interested.

Washington Post columnist Jim Hoagland wrote this week that U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden was set to press MacKay's candidacy when he visits Alliance headquarters today.

"I don't think that traditions, in the sense that geography should be a restriction on any position within NATO, should apply given the fact that Canada ... is a 60-year participant in NATO," MacKay told a news conference.

"I don't believe that a person's nationality, given the number of NATO countries ... should ever be a bar to ascendancy to any role in NATO."

REUTERS

Tradition

- The job has always gone to a European.
- The current secretary-general, Dutchman Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, is due to step down in July.

Vehicles in critical condition: Lt.-Gen.

MILITARY So many of the armoured vehicles used to train Canadian soldiers for the mission in Afghanistan have broken down that the situation is becoming critical, the commander of land forces said yesterday.

"We are running out of time to keep your army functioning the way that it should because our vehicle breakage rates are now higher than I've ever seen them," Lt.-Gen. Andrew Leslie told the Senate's defence committee.

Leslie blamed the tough treatment the vehicles were subjected to in the field before they were turned over to military training forces.

REUTERS

Funding **Protecting Canadian media**

MIKE CASSESE/REUTERS

James Moore, minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, laughs with actors Hugh Dillon and Enrico Colantoni yesterday on the set of their television series Flashpoint. Moore announced the creation of the Canadian Media Fund to improve access to Canadian programming on all media platforms. Ottawa is expected to spend $310 million on the fund over the next two years.

News in brief

ONTARIO Four in five Ontarians feel the provincial economy is "poor" and most do not believe Premier Dalton McGuinty has a plan to improve things, a new Toronto Star-Angus Reid Strategies poll suggests.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cash for car buyers?
The Canadian unit of Ford proposed yesterday that Ottawa provide a $3,500 incentive to consumers who buy a new vehicle in 2009. **REUTERS**

Break in cold case

Oscar Jones sombrely studied the statuette's face. The pronounced cheeks. The soft mouth. It wasn't a perfect likeness, but Jones knew the face on TV was the face of his brother, Eric, who had disappeared four decades earlier.

Forensic experts sculpted the facial reconstruction using skeletal remains, which had been found by a hunter in a wooded area near Coboconk, Ont., a small community in the Kawartha Lakes, on Dec. 17, 1967.

"You know, some people have said, 'It's been 40 years, Oscar. This should be no problem.' But as far as I'm concerned, it's like he died yesterday," Jones said from his home in Noelville yesterday evening. "And the way we found out. If somebody had said he'd been in an accident or something — but the way he died. It's just awful."

"As far as I'm concerned, it's like he died yesterday."
Oscar Jones, brother of murder victim

Eric had been left in the woods naked with his hands bound. Investigators were never able to determine a cause of death because the body had decomposed. He had been reported missing eight months earlier.

Investigators linked the homicide to a similar case the following spring, after a body was discovered in a hedgerow near Schomberg on May 15, 1968. That victim, later identified as 17-year-old Richard (Dickie) Hovey, was naked. A shoelace located nearby indicated he too had been bound.

Investigators believe he had been there since the previous summer or spring.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Contest searching for plus-sized models

VICTORIA HANDYSIDES
victoria.handysides@metronews.ca

CONTRACT An Edmonton woman is proving that you don't have to be a size zero to be beautiful.

Chantelle Thompson, 23, will board a plane bound for Toronto next week, to find out if she's been selected as the winner in Canada's Plus Size Model Search.

The barista was recently selected to be in the top 10 for the contest, sponsored by plus size retailers Penningtons, Addition Elle and MXM, and LouLou Magazine.

She bashfully admitted that before entering, she'd never considered modeling before.

"I never really thought it was a possibility for me," she said. "This is something that hasn't been put in the spotlight before by society."

Chantelle Thompson

Thompson surpassed thousands for the spot. The five-foot-nine, size-18, blond said that though she spent much of her life ashamed of her body shape, she's never felt more alive.

"I'm not perfect. I'm not a size zero, or even a two, or a four. I'm a bigger person, and I'm happy with myself," she said. "One day I decided that I feel great and embrace myself, and show people that they can be confident as well."

If chosen, Thompson will receive a one-year modelling contract.

Escapee appears in Halifax court

SECURITY No chances were being taken as Jermaine Carvery made an appearance yesterday afternoon in Halifax Provincial Court.

Carvery infamously managed to break out of his leg shackles and escape from guards last April during a transfer from prison to the Victoria General Hospital for day surgery.

He was eventually caught two months later in Niagara Falls and sent back to Halifax last week. Yesterday, there was extra security on hand for his court appearance.

METRO CANADA

ROBIN KUNISKI FOR METRO CANADA

Atheist ads rolled out on select Calgary buses yesterday on various routes and city transit confirmed counter-ads from religious groups are on their way.

Debate over God on Calgary buses

DEBATE The debate over whether or God's existence has taken to Calgary buses.

Eight buses started displaying ads paid for by the Canadian Free Thought Association yesterday, saying, "There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life."

METRO CANADA

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Researchers discredit anti-malaria drug
The anti-malaria drug quinacrine does not appear to extend the lives of people with the human form of mad cow disease, despite encouraging results from experiments with mice, British researchers said. REUTERS

World

Washers liberated women: Vatican

The Vatican newspaper says that perhaps the washing machine did more to liberate women in the 20th century than the pill or the right to work. The submission was made in a lengthy article titled The Washing Machine and the Liberation of Women — Put in the Detergent, Close the Lid and Relax. REUTERS

Stem cell limits lifted

Obama repeals restrictions set by Bush administration

U.S. President Barack Obama lifted restrictions on federal funding of human embryonic stem cell research yesterday, angering abortion opponents but cheering those who believe the study could produce treatments for many diseases.

"We will lift the ban on federal funding for promising embryonic stem cell research," Obama said to vigorous applause at a White House gathering.

"We will also vigorously support scientists who pursue this research. And we will aim for America to lead the world in the discoveries it one day may yield."

Shares of companies specializing in stem cell research burst upward on the news, with Geron Corp. up by as much as 35 per cent and StemCells Inc. up 73 per cent at one point. Other related company shares rose, too.

The decision was a clear repudiation of the approach taken by Obama's predecessor, George W. Bush. U.S. law limits the use of federal money to make human stem cells, but Bush tightened the restrictions even further to include work using such cells.

Bush's decision prompted charges that he was basing his decision on politics and religion rather than science. Religious conservatives who supported Bush generally opposed embryonic stem cell research because it involves destruction of embryos, which they view as human life.

"When it comes to stem cell research, rather than furthering discovery, our government has forced what I believe is a false choice between sound science and moral values," Obama said. "As a person of faith, I believe we are called to care for each other and work to ease human suffering." REUTERS

Progress made

- U.S. scientists said they have taken an important step toward making an artificial life form by making a ribosome — the cell's factory. The ribosome makes the proteins that carry out key business for all forms of life.

Germany **Evolution of Barbie**

CHRISTIAN CHARISIUS/REUTERS

A teenager looks at a Barbie doll version of German Chancellor Angela Merkel yesterday during an event at a department store in Hamburg. Barbie has been chosen to honour and recognize Merkel as a very modern role model for girls around the world. The Barbie doll, which debuted on March 9, 1959, celebrated its 50th anniversary worldwide yesterday.

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Gigolo con man jailed

CRIME A former Swiss investment banker was jailed for six years yesterday for trying to blackmail Germany's wealthiest woman, the heiress to the BMW car empire, with secret video of their lovemaking.

Sgarbi

Helg Sgarbi admitted at the start of his trial that he had seduced heiress Susanne Klatten and three other wealthy women, persuading them to pay him almost $16.43 million under various false pretexts.

"I regret what I did," Sgarbi, 44, told the Munich court, with little emotion. "I apologize to the women involved."

Klatten, a member of the Quandt family — the leading shareholders in carmaker BMW — went public last year with the story of how her lover secretly shot intimate footage and later demanded tens of millions of euros not to reveal it. REUTERS

No new troops in Northern Ireland

PEACE PROCESS The killing of two soldiers by dissident republicans in Northern Ireland followed by the killing of a police officer will not be allowed to derail the peace process in the British-ruled province, U.K. Prime Minister Gordon Brown said yesterday.

British troops would not be put back onto the streets, an official said, as leaders tried to ensure the attack did not reverse progress. REUTERS

News in brief

CHINA Anti-riot forces are ready to extinguish any unrest in Tibet, a Chinese senior officer said yesterday, while an overseas group critical of Beijing said 1,200 Tibetans remain missing after a security crackdown 12 months ago.

MILITARY Sri Lankan soldiers killed at least 180 elite Tamil Tiger fighters carrying out waves of counterattacks, and the pace of refugees fleeing the tiny war zone picked up speed, the military said yesterday.

MIDDLE EAST Hamas' popularity among Palestinians has risen sharply since a three-week Israeli war in January devastated the Islamist-ruled Gaza Strip, an opinion poll released yesterday showed. The face-to-face poll of 1,270 people by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research was conducted March 5-7 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as the factions tried to reach agreement on a unity government with Egyptian mediation. REUTERS

U.S. joblessness near Depression high: Statician
The U.S. unemployment rate would be 19.1 per cent, close to the level during the Great Depression, using the methodology that prevailed 80 years ago, according to statician John Williams from Shadowstats.com. REUTERS

China hassled navy boat: U.S.

Americans lodge protest in Beijing against aggressive conduct

The United States yesterday urged China to observe international maritime rules after the Pentagon said five Chinese ships, including a naval vessel, harassed a U.S. navy ship in international waters.

The Chinese vessels "shadowed and aggressively manoeuvered in dangerously close proximity" to the USNS Impeccable Sunday, with one vessel coming within 25 feet of the U.S. ship, a Defense Department statement said.

"We are going to continue to operate in those international waters and we expect the Chinese to observe international laws."
Robert Gibbs, White House spokesperson

The American ship, an unarmed ocean surveillance vessel, was conducting routine operations in the South China Sea 75 miles south of Hainan Island, according to the Pentagon.

Defence officials said the incident followed days of increasingly aggressive Chinese conduct in the area, including fly-bys of two U.S. navy ships by Chinese maritime surveillance planes.

"Our ships operate fairly regularly in international waters where these incidents took place," White House spokesperson Robert Gibbs told a news conference.

"We are going to continue to operate in those international waters and we expect the Chinese to observe international laws around them."

China said the U.S. naval vessel was conducting illegal surveying off its southern island of Hainan, a Hong Kong television website reported last night. REUTERS

Iranian gets 5 years for goggle deal

SENTENCING An Iranian woman was sentenced to more than five years in prison for brokering a deal to send night-vision goggles to Iran in violation of the U.S. embargo, prosecutors said yesterday. The goggles are considered highly sensitive U.S. military equipment that may not be exported without a special licence. REUTERS

Experts to study French woman's case

REPATRIATION Mexican and French legal experts will examine whether a French woman sentenced to 60 years imprisonment in Mexico on kidnapping charges can be repatriated to France, the presidents of the two countries said yesterday.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy said he had spoken on the telephone with Florence Cassez and would back her request to be transferred to France, but stressed that did not mean she would be freed.

"I am not here to challenge Mexican justice," Sarkozy said during a news conference alongside Mexican President Felipe Calderon. "If she is transferred, she will be transferred from a Mexican prison to a French prison."

Cassez, 34, was arrested in 2005 with her Mexican boyfriend Israel Vallarta in a dramatic police swoop at a ranch where three people, including an eight-year-old girl, were being held hostage.

Her case has gripped the media in both countries. Her family insists she is innocent. REUTERS

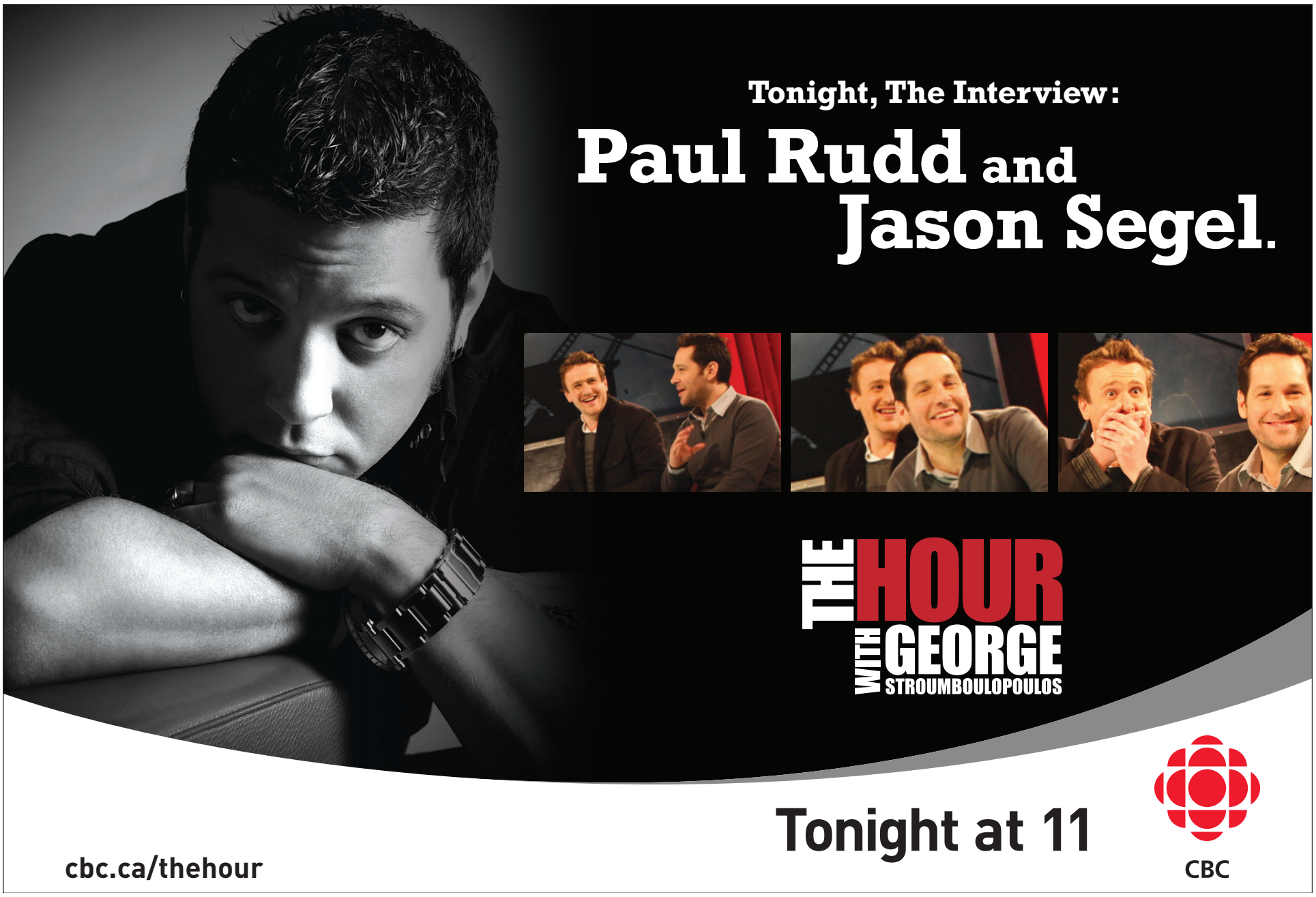
Pakistan **Lawyers take to streets**

STRINGER/REUTERS

Lawyers chant slogans as they burn an effigy of Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari during a protest rally in Multan yesterday. Lawyers gathered to demand the reinstatement of sacked judges dismissed by former president Pervez Musharraf during his emergency rule in November 2007.

News in brief

UAW Ford Motor Co. and the United Auto Workers said yesterday that workers had agreed to U.S. contract concessions and a new funding arrangement for a retiree health-care trust to help the automaker preserve cash amid the auto industry downturn. REUTERS



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Comment & Views

Comment

Newt's economic 8-ball

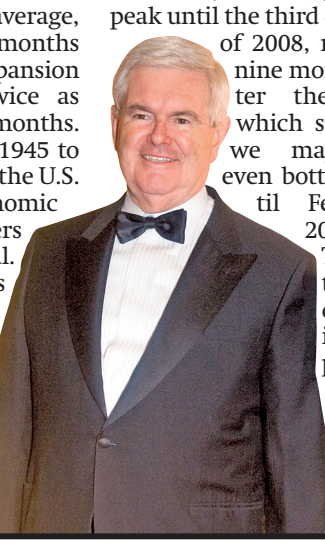
InBusiness

Charles Davies

When even Newt Gingrich has an opinion about the duration of the recession, you know economic forecasting is now officially as out of control as, say, U.S. mortgage lending was a year and a half ago. Reasonable people think we'll hit bottom anywhere from a few months to a few years out. Gingrich, a former House of Representatives Speaker and all-around gloomy anti-bailout Republican, thinks the U.S. won't be in good shape for three to five years.

But really, though, how long is it going to take before job losses, bailouts, falling share prices and slumping GDP numbers yield to good news? If history is any guide, Canada's economy should look a lot better by late 2010.

How do I know this? Well, the National Bureau of Economic Research in the U.S. records 32 economic cycles since 1854 — a cycle being the period from one peak of economic activity to another. On average, recessions last 17 months while periods of expansion are more than twice as long, typically 38 months. In the period from 1945 to 2001, during which the U.S. experienced 10 economic cycles, the numbers are more congenial. Post-war recessions average 10 months with growth periods running 57 months, perhaps a tribute to the economic management tools developed in the wake of the Great Depression.



But let's be cautious. Using the broader, 155-year averages, and accepting the consensus that the U.S. economy peaked in December 2007, Americans should hit bottom roughly in May. Thereafter, we could see a gradual return to growth that tops out in about July 2012.

Canada, however, didn't peak until the third quarter of 2008, roughly nine months after the U.S., which suggests we may not even bottom until February 2010. Then, things could improve briskly, paced by a U.S. economy that's already in second gear.

Averages are just averages, of course. And other factors — our national economic dependence on commodities like oil and gas, for example — can make economic forecasting a mug's game.

As a fall back position, consider a doomsday scenario. With the sole exception of the Panic of 1873, when the collapse of the Northern Pacific Railroad triggered a 65-month slide in the U.S., the 43-month Great Depression is the worst North America has endured. Using that standard, the U.S. won't bottom until July 2011 and won't really be humming until late 2012. Which, come to think of it, is pretty much what Newt thinks will happen.

Charles Davies is a veteran business writer and editor who has worked for news organizations and publications including Business Week, Canadian Business, Report On Business magazine, Reuters, and Financial Post.

Views

Should faces be covered in court?

Alia Hogben
metronews.ca

I don't envy the Ontario Supreme Court judge who has to make this Solomon-like decision regarding the conflict between rights.

In a recent sexual assault case, the judge ruled that a woman complainant must show her face, even though she argued it was her religious right to wear the full face covering (the niqab).

The judge's decision was based on the fact she showed her face for her driver's licence, so her face can be seen by anyone who needs proof of her identity. The judge also said showing her face is necessary so the accused and their lawyers can assess her demeanour, with all the cues provided by facial and verbal expressions.

The judge's decision is being appealed to the Ontario Supreme Court. The Ontario Human Rights Commission has asked for intervener status at the court so it can explain religious rights.

This seemingly simple issue raises major issues about religious rights: The right of the accused, diverse interpretation of religious injunctions and religious/cultural accommodation.

Face covering is demanded by some extreme conservative Muslims, and the Toronto woman is choosing this conservative interpretation for herself, although this is not required in Islam.

The difficulty for someone like me is that I must respect the woman's choice and I cannot tell the woman she must show her face, and for all I know this particular woman is fully integrated into Canadian society.

However, this conundrum goes beyond the courtroom.

There are some Muslims who are increasing the number of identity markers, for example the niqab, to create a distinct identity, which is leading to self- segregation.

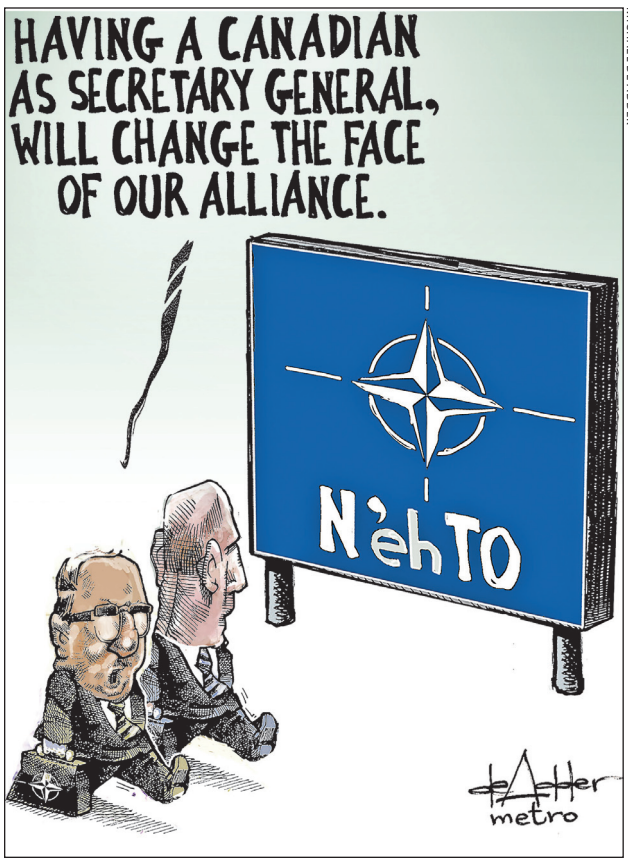
Before I am lambasted, I acknowledge that I am generalizing when I say wearing the niqab creates a separation between a woman and all others — and may, in many instances, restrict full participation in Canadian society.

Surely we Muslims should be active participants because we cannot fight racism and discrimination nor demand changes if we are not involved as full citizens.

I don't envy the Ontario Supreme Court judge who has to make this Solomon-like decision regarding the conflict between rights.

I am sure the judge will consider the resolution of such cases may strengthen the more conservative elements within the Muslim communities and set precedents for the legal system.

Alia Hogben is the executive director of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, an organization of believing women who value equality of all



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Online Chatter

Dziekanski's death affects everyone

Re: Poles in Canada and abroad following Dziekanski inquiry with anger, confusion (March 8)

I am Canadian, my family has been Canadian for five generations, originally from Scotland.

Dziekanski's death hits us all! Canadians (most) had given police unchallenged trust, the power to detain, arrest, shoot, Taser, club, jail and even kill if necessary as long as it is justified and in the line of duty.

We have seen the RCMP Complaints Commission under scrutiny, as well as the police commission in B.C. where Dziekanski died at the hands of police.

Comments by username broadpowers

Officer's should be fired

Re: Poles in Canada and abroad following Dziekanski inquiry with anger, confusion (March 8)

What I am finding very difficult to accept is that four young, likely physically fit RCMP members were unable to restrain a single male who of course had a stapler.

As a retired police officer, we never had the luxury of having four members to restore order involving a single male, we never had all the present day equipment.

The four RCMP should be criminally charged and fired, we don't need this kind of crap.

Comments by username kojack

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Metro Online Poll Results

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Former Caisse CEO assumes some responsibility for loss
The former CEO of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec said yesterday he takes responsibility for some of the fund's $39.8-billion loss last year. Henri-Paul Rousseau headed the fund from 2002 until he left in May 2008. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Housing starts drop 12.3%

Groundbreakings fall for sixth straight month to 134,600

Canadian housing starts fell by a greater than expected 12.3 per cent in February, marking a sixth consecutive monthly decline and their lowest level since June 2000, as the domestic economy struggles through a major downturn.

Groundbreakings on new homes dropped to a seasonally adjusted annualized rate of 134,600 units last month from 153,500 in January, with declines seen in the single- and multiple-dwelling sectors, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. said yesterday.

The number of starts in February was below analyst forecasts for 145,000 starts.

But there was a silver lining in the weak numbers. While it suggests builders are responding to weaker demand, which could have a short-term negative effect on economic activity, it also indicates there may not be a severe oversupply of homes.

"As an economist looking at this, it's good news that the markets are working. They're taking their cues from the price signals and those signals are telling them not to build right now," said Pascal Gauthier, an economist at TD Bank.

Economists continue to describe the Canadian housing downturn as a "correction" that will last the better part of 2009, and many expect the market to make a recovery in 2010.

REUTERS

Numbers

- Construction of urban single-family homes fell 11 per cent to 44,500 units, while multiple dwellings, like condos, dropped 17.5 per cent to 63,300 units.

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Global financial market losses total $50T: Study

ASSETS The global financial crisis slashed the value of financial assets worldwide by $50 trillion US last year, a study commissioned by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said yesterday.

Financial asset losses in developing Asia, which suffered more than other emerging markets, totalled $9.6 trillion, or just over one year's worth of developing Asia's gross domestic product, the study said.

"The previous sense of strength and invulnerability is now gone," said the ADB-sponsored study, noting that "there were concerns about the effect of a shallow recession in the United States, but the general perception was that Asia ... was doing well."

REUTERS

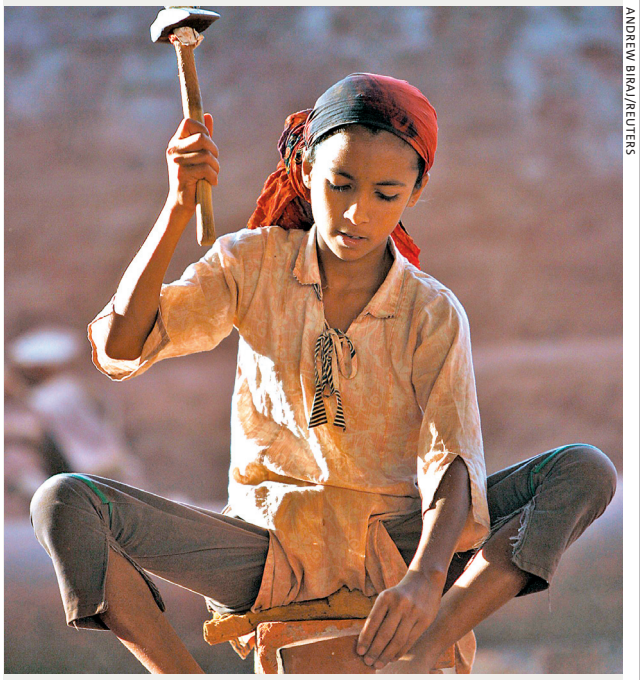
U.S. has 'fallen off a cliff': Buffett

INTERVIEW Warren Buffett said yesterday the U.S. economy had "fallen off a cliff" but would eventually recover, though a rebound could kindle inflation worse than that experienced in the late 1970s.

Speaking on CNBC television, the 78-year-old billionaire said the country is experiencing a "close to the worst-case" scenario of falling business activity and rising unemployment, causing consumer confidence and spending to tumble.

Buffett called on Democratic and Republican policymakers to set aside partisan differences and unite under President Barack Obama to wage an "economic war" that will fix the economy and restore confidence in banking. **REUTERS**

Bangladesh **Brickworks**



ANDREW BIRA/REUTERS

A girl smashes bricks as she works at a construction site in Dhaka. About 25 women are employed at the site and most work 12 hours a day. Their daily wage is 60 taka (about $1.17).

Business in brief

DRUGS Merck & Co. Inc. said yesterday that it would acquire Schering-Plough Corp. for $41.1 billion US, uniting the makers of cholesterol drugs Zetia and Vytorin.

LAYOFFS U.S. newspaper publisher McClatchy said yesterday it would cut 1,600 jobs in an attempt to deal with the faltering economy. **REUTERS**

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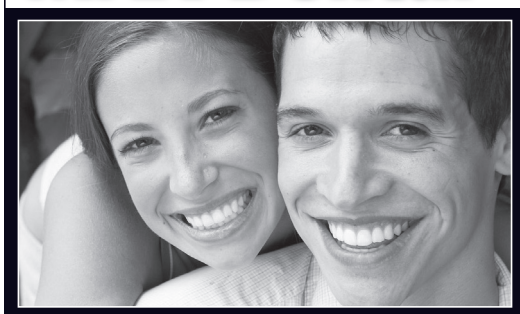

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Bringing up baby

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Sooner or later, most parents will be looking for child care — whether it's daycare, a nanny, or (if you're lucky) grandparents.

But which option will best fit into your daily routine and spending plan? Most parents will agree that it's tough to find quality care and make the most of your dollars.

Now if you can't find a full-time family member, daycare is often one of the most popular options. However, with daycare spaces being limited and waiting times averaging a year or more, it's a good idea to get on a list early.

Daycare is generally a more affordable option if you have one or two children.

But signing up at too many daycares before knowing exactly what you want can be costly. Usually you have to pay a deposit, anywhere from $20 to $100, and you might not get this money back.

Daycare is generally a more affordable option if you have one or two children. For kids two years and older (depending on where you're located) it generally costs between $700 to $1,000 a month, for full-time, licensed daycare, five days a week.

Finding daycare for infants from six months to a year can be more difficult and because of the increased need for staff, it's usually more expensive too. To keep costs down, you can look for a daycare that allows you to pack a lunch for your child — provided you have the time to make it.

You also need to consider the time it takes to drive to your daycare. If it's way off your route to work, you need to factor in gas costs and the hours of operation.

The total cost of a live-in nanny is about $2,000 a month (depending on location). While their salary is usually around $1,000 a month, you'll also need to pay for their employment benefits and pension. Plus you'll need to have a spare room in your house. The plus side is you can deduct a portion of their room and board from their salary based on government guidelines. And if you hire through an agency you'll also have to pay the agency a fee, which can vary from a one-time placement fee to a percentage of their salary.

If you have a close friend or neighbour with kids you can nanny share and agree to split the costs of a nanny as some nannies will agree to look after up to four kids in one house. So if you can find a friend with one other child, you would cut the cost of a nanny in half.

For more on child care costs, hop onto smartcookies.com and visit the forum for new or expecting moms. Questions for the

So if you can find a friend with one other child, you would cut the cost of a nanny in half.

Smart Cookies can be emailed to smartcookies@metronews.ca. Tune in Monday nights at 10:30 p.m. for a new episode of Smart Cookies on the W network.

Tune in Monday nights at 10:30 p.m. EST/PST on the W Network and be sure to visit smartcookies.com for more tips.

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Allan Small

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No rest for the wicked

Fraud techniques are constantly evolving

MoneyMatters

Henry Choo Chong
choochonghcga@yahoo.ca

Q Recently, I received an email with a request to verify information. I replied, as I was familiar with the institution. Several days later, I was informed by my financial institution my account had been compromised. I hope you print this because it has taught me a lesson.
— Bernice, Alberta

A The English dictionary defines "fraud" as the intentional deception resulting in injury to another person; something intended to deceive. New fraudulent schemes are invented everyday. Fraudsters work 24/7 and use the most modern of technology.

Individuals must be careful to secure personal information and always be cautious when revealing such. Fraudsters use many simple and creative ways to get your personal information, such as some of the following:

Phishing
- Emails claiming to be legit institutions to obtain personal information.

Dumpster divings
- Fraudsters go through your garbage seeking your bills, bank statements, etc. If you have a shredder, use it.

Skimming
- Stealing numbers for your credit/debit cards when processing your card. Be careful next time you fill up at the pump.

Old-fashioned stealing
- Rob you of your wallets/purses with all your credit cards, etc. Not exactly high-tech, but effective.

Individuals should be on the alert, as scams are created faster than I can write my next column. The following list should keep you on the look out:

1-900 scam
- An offer in the mail to claim your winnings by calling a 1-900 number. Your cost is per-minute charges, your possible winnings, a loonie or twoonie.

Foreign country scam
- Emails to transfer millions of dollars to your bank account with an eventual request for a small processing fee.

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) tax refund
- Emails claiming to be CRA requesting personal information in order to process tax refund. This is not the CRA!

Unfortunately, we live in a society that often reflects our cliché; If it sounds too good to true, it probably is. Be wary!

Fraud fact sheet

Recognize a scam:
- It sounds too good to be true
- Reveal private and personal information
- Pay a small fee
- Call 1-900 number
- Caller wants to be your best friend

If you suspect a scam:
- Do not call back or respond
- Delete email
- Hang up
- Report scam

How to report a scam:
- RCMP — Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre; 1-888-495-8501; info@phonebusters.com
- Competition Bureau of Industry Canada; 1-800-348-5358; compbureau@ic.gc.ca

Reach Henry Choo Chong, CGA, at choochonghcga@yahoo.ca .

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Barkley released after three-day sentence

Former NBA star Charles Barkley was released from an Arizona jail yesterday after serving a three-day sentence on a drunken-driving conviction. Barkley spent about 36 hours in jail after getting 12 hours of work release on Sunday and yesterday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Sharapova back for doubles

Three-time major champion Maria Sharapova will return to the WTA Tour this week after missing more than seven months by playing doubles at an event in Indian Wells, California. Sharapova, who has not played since pulling out of a tournament in Montreal last July with a right shoulder injury, will compete in doubles for the first time in nearly four years, teaming with Elena Vesnina.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

Canada bounced by Italy

Baseball team out of WBC after stunning home-turf loss

WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC

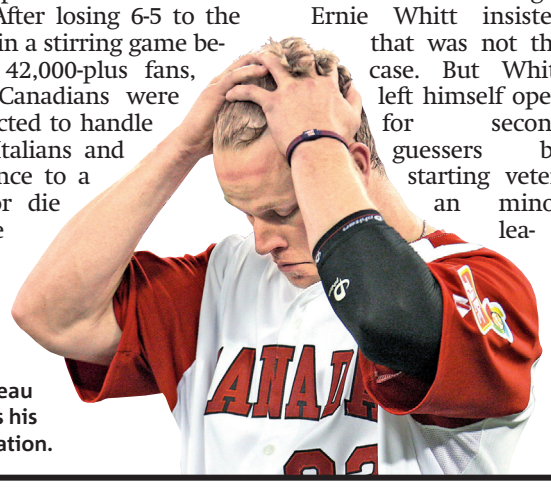
Italy 6, Canada 2

Italia VS

It's over. Team Canada, which captured the collective imagination of Canadian baseball fans with a great performance against the U.S. Saturday, bowed out of the World Baseball Classic last night with what was undeniably an embarrassing effort against Italy at the Rogers Centre.

Canada, let down by its pitching, was never in it against the underdog Italians, who scored four runs in the first four innings en route to a 6-2 win that eliminated Canada from the double-knockout global tournament. This was undeniably a bitter pill to swallow for the Canadians. They were playing with a great lineup in their home country. After losing 6-5 to the USA in a stirring game before 42,000-plus fans, the Canadians were expected to handle the Italians and advance to a do or die game tonight against Venezuela. Was Canada looking past the Italians, a squad which manager Marco Mazzieri said was based mostly on "guys who play (in Europe) and have day jobs"?

Canadian manager Ernie Whitt insisted that was not the case. But Whitt left himself open for second guessers by starting veteran minor league



Justin Morneau shows his frustration.

11 Canadian runners left on base against Italy.

guer Vince Perkins and saving Blue Jays starter Scott Richmond — considered Canada's ace — for a potential game against Venezuela.

"If we don't make it to (the Venezuela game), you can write I'm a bonehead for not starting Richmond," Whitt said for before the game. "Hopefully we'll be in a position where I won't look like a bonehead."

Perkins led an onslaught of ineffective pitching, which saw six Canadian hurlers surrender seven walks and nine hits.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Carbonneau fired, Gainey takes over

NHL The Montreal Canadiens fired head coach Guy Carbonneau yesterday, and team general manager Bob Gainey will take over behind the bench.

Carbonneau was in his third season as head coach of the Habs. Viewed by many as one of the preseason favourites to win the Stanley Cup, the Canadiens currently sit in the fifth position in the Eastern Conference with 77 points, only two points ahead of ninth-place Carolina.

Gainey, who has served as the team's general manager since 2003, will take over as head coach for the second time in his tenure with the team. He also coached for 41 games in 2006 after firing Claude Julien, posting a 23-15-3 record in the regular season before being defeated in six games by eventual Stanley Cup champion Carolina in the first round.

Carbonneau

Carbonneau led Montreal to a first-place finish in the conference during the 2007-08 season before a disappointing five-game series loss to Philadelphia in the second round.

In his two-plus seasons at the helm in Montreal, Carbonneau posted a 124-83-23 record in 230 games.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Whitecaps fall in Africa
The Vancouver Whitecaps FC suffered a 3-0 loss to Young Africans FC in the opening match of their trip to Tanzania yesterday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

LUCY NICHOLSON/REUTERS

Los Angeles Kings Jack Johnson checks Vancouver Canuck Kyle Wellwood during the first period of their NHL hockey match in Los Angeles last night. The Kings won 3-2.

Kings beat Canucks

SCOTT RINTOUL
for Metro Vancouver

NHL RESULT

Canucks 2 Kings 3

VS

THE SKINNY: Jarret Stoll scored a pair of power-play goals as the Kings won their third straight on home ice and ended the Canucks' four-game winning streak in the process. Denis Gauthier notched the other L.A. marker while Alex Burrows and Taylor Pyatt replied for Vancouver.

THE SWING: After Burrows had cut the Kings' lead in half, Mats Sundin took a terrible interference penalty in front of the L.A. net. Ten seconds later, Stoll restored the two goal advantage with what proved to be the winning goal.

THE IRON: With the Canucks down 3-2 and operating on a third period power play, Daniel Sedin's wrist shot beat Jonathan Quick, but not the goal post.

THE DISCIPLINE: ... or lack thereof. During Vancouver's four-game win streak, the Canucks were shorthanded a total of eleven times. L.A. had six power plays last night and capitalized on two of them.

THE DOT: The Kings dominated the Canucks in the face-off circle, winning 59 per cent of the draws on the night.

THE RATING: Somewhat of a letdown for the Canucks after Saturday's impressive win over the Sharks. Give the Kings credit, but it wasn't real pretty. 3 out of 5 stars.

THE NEXT GAME: The Canucks get a day to fight greater L.A. traffic before tomorrow's game against the Ducks at Anaheim's Honda Center.

Martin, Howard still dominating at Brier

CURLING Kevin Martin and Glen Howard continue to steamroll the field at the Tim Hortons Brier in Calgary.

Martin, the reigning national and world champion, and Howard, who won the same crowns in 2007, are tied atop the leaderboard after three days of action with 5-0 records.

Both posted wins in nail-biters last night to maintain perfection.

Martin's Edmonton rink put two on the board in the 10th end to defeat 2006 Olympic gold-medallist Brad Gushue of Newfoundland and Labrador 5-4. Dating back to last year's Brier, Martin has won 18 straight.

Howard lifted his Ontario rink to a 7-6 come-from-behind victory over Saskatchewan's Joel Jordison by scoring three in the 10th end on an incredible highlight-reel shot.

Manitoba's Jeff Stoughton is next behind the co-leaders at 4-1.

Martin faces British Columbia's Sean Geall in today's morning draw and P.E.I.'s Rod MacDonald in the afternoon.

Howard is up against brother Russ Howard of New Brunswick in the morning and Stoughton in the evening.

METRO CANADA

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Ottawa 2 Toronto 1
Carolina 3 N.Y. Rangers 0
Los Angeles 3 **VANCOUVER** 2

TONIGHT'S GAMES
Calgary at New Jersey
Buffalo at Philadelphia
Boston at Columbus
N.Y. Islanders at Toronto
Edmonton at Montreal
Florida at Pittsburgh
Phoenix at Detroit
Washington at Nashville
San Jose at Minnesota
Dallas at St. Louis
Atlanta at Colorado

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Atlanta 89 New Orleans 79
Detroit 98 Orlando 94
Houston 97 Denver 95
Miami 130 Chicago 127 (2OT)
Washington 110 Minnesota 99
L.A. Lakers at Portland

TONIGHT'S GAMES
Utah at Indiana
New York at Milwaukee
Charlotte at San Antonio
Dallas at Phoenix
Oklahoma City at Sacramento
Cleveland at L.A. Clippers

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Home loan tip

Taking out a loan for a renovation will improve your monthly cash flow and allow you to complete your project in one phase rather than multiple stages. **NEWS CANADA**

Spring Lending

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

ARIEL SKELLEY/THE IMAGE BANK

The weak economy has made real estate a buyer's market in most parts of Canada, and the spring and summer months could see a wave of buying if bargains continue.

'Do your research': Experts

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

If you're a first-time buyer with a steady financial situation, you might be chomping at the bit to catch a good deal in the current down market — just make sure you crunch the numbers first.

Jim Rawson, a regional manager with Canadian mortgage brokerage firm Invis, says the weak economy has made real estate a buyer's market in most parts of Canada and the spring and summer months could see a wave of buying if bargains continue to make it onto the market.

Yet, the economy hasn't shown major signs of an upswing, so you should be wary of biting off more than you can chew.

Bottom line: Don't rush into anything, because you don't need to — do your research, take your time and shop around.

Rawson says the most important thing to do before setting out to buy a house is to get a pre-approval on your mortgage so you'll know exactly how much home you can afford.

"You don't want to go out looking for that first home without knowing how much you can afford to spend. A lot of home buyers will go out and find their dream home only to realize there's no way they could afford it," Rawson said.

If you need a little extra money for your down payment and you are a first-time buyer, you or your partner can take out up to $25,000 per person from your RRSP for any reason related to buying a home — including covering closing fees, land transfer taxes or a down payment. You then have 15 years to repay the money back into your RRSP.

"You don't want to go out looking for that first home without knowing how much you can afford to spend." Jim Rawson

Gary Robertson, a financial adviser with Edward Jones, says you do have to be careful if you start dipping too deeply into things like RRSPs or emergency funds to buy your house, however.

"Don't stretch yourself to the limit — leave some wiggle room because you need to afford the expenses that come with owning a home.

"Utilities, property taxes, condo fees — all those things have to be added in and that could make the home not affordable," Robertson said.

Plan for the worst possible scenario and make sure you can adjust accordingly, as current interest rates can seem deceptively low.

"Be pessimistic about the future of interest rates. If you're paying four per cent now, you're probably going to be paying six to seven per cent upon renewal of your mortgage," Robertson said.

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Break can reduce taxes by 15 per cent

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

A tax break introduced in Stephen Harper's 2009 budget is good news for home-owners planning renovations, experts say.

"Anyone who's thinking of doing any kind of home renovation over the next few years should probably try to accelerate that if they can afford to," said Jamie Golombek, managing director of tax and estate planning for CIBC.

The Home Renovation Tax Credit is valid for any home-renovation expenses paid after Jan. 27 and before Feb. 1, 2010. Tax-payers can claim a credit that reduces taxes payable by 15 per cent of expenses over $1,000 and under $10,000. A bit of math reveals that gives you a maximum credit of $1,350.

"Anyone who's thinking of doing any kind of home renovation over the next few years should probably accelerate that if they can afford to." Jamie Golombek

"They really have to be expenses that are of an 'enduring nature,' something integral to the dwelling. That includes the cost of labour and building materials," Golombek explained.

Renovating your kitchen or bathroom, or putting in new carpeting, hard-wood floors, a new deck or other extension, furnace, roof, driveway, interior and exterior painting, in-ground swimming pools and landscaping all qualify.

Things like furniture, appliances, carpet cleaning, house cleaning and snow removal don't qualify.

Renovating your bathroom is an expense that would qualify for a tax break that was introduced in the 2009 federal budget.

Golombek reminds people to save their receipts, and notes that Cra-arc.gc.ca has a list of what qualifies.

The tax break is also good for the owner of vacation property.

When it comes time to do the work, do the math first, says Janice Rice of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. "In this case, the pen is mightier than the hammer."

First, assess what you want to renovate and how much that will cost. Next, explore your financing options. If the cost is low, credit cards, renovation loans or lines of credit may be the best fit.

"These products are excellent for renovations someone wants to pay off in a short period of time," Rice says. The interest rates are higher, but the loans are more convenient.

If you have major plans, look at spreading the cost over a longer period with a mortgage. That can be a conventional mortgage, which will typically go up to 80 per cent of the property value, or a CMHC-insured mortgage.

"That allows the home owner to get a maximum mortgage amount of 95 per cent," she explains. "It gives them the ability to finance a larger-scale renovation over a longer period of time at very competitive interest rates."

Check out Cmhc-schl.gc.ca for a range of financing options.

Great News for Home Owners.
It's worth a talk.

Timely advice to help you save on your borrowing.
Whatever your goals, a CIBC advisor will help you find the right borrowing solutions, along with ways to save with our time-limited borrowing offers, which you can combine with the newly announced Federal Government home owner tax credits.

Newly announced tax credits benefit home purchase and renovation.
The Federal Government has announced tax credits that will deliver substantial savings to consumers looking to purchase or renovate. These include a $750 tax credit for first-time home buyers and a temporary Home Renovation Tax Credit of up to $1,350 on eligible renovations.

Time-limited borrowing offers:
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2. Waived Set-Up Service Fee on CIBC Home Power line of credit
3. Waived first year annual fee on CIBC Dividend Platinum Visa card

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2. Save with our Set-Up Service Fee Waiver[2] **offer!** Until July 31, 2009, we will waive the Set-up Service Fee[3] on our CIBC Home Power® line of credit (HPLOC) if you meet the minimum balance requirement. This could save you hundreds of dollars. A CIBC HPLOC is ideal for financing large expenses like home renovations.
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The cost of doing business

Short-term financing options — such as an overdraft or an operating line of credit — can help business to pay suppliers, increase inventory and cover expenses when they may not have sufficient cash on hand. NEWS CANADA

Many people are intimidated by their visit to the bank.

Winning over the bankers

How to turn your entrepreneurial dream into reality

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

It all starts with an idea.

Chatting with friends, family or co-workers, someone dreams up their own business and vows to make it work. But, the challenging part is changing those ideas into actions. And for businesses to be successful in the future, it will require the help of bankers in the present.

"A lot of people are under the impression that money grows on trees," says Jaime Wombolt, a business information officer with Canada Business Nova Scotia. "It's not that it's their fault. It's just the truth of the matter."

Wombolt says officers at Canada Business centres all over the country work with prospective small business owners to connect them with the real-life resources they need.

"We consider ourselves to be a one-stop shop for business information," she says. "A lot of people have a great idea for a business and no idea how to go about it."

However, Wombolt says their Financing Info Guide and Business Plan Guide are two great tools entrepreneurs can use to prepare for the process of approaching a bank for a loan.

Lesley Lawrence, Toronto-East vice-president and area manager for the Montréal-based Business Development Bank of Canada, says the most important element of acquiring a business loan is a solid business plan.

"Talk to people within the industry you are trying to get into." Lesley Lawrence

"It shouldn't be a 45-page document. It should be clear and concise and you should be trying to make it as simple as possible," she says. "You want to show your banker how you will succeed in paying the business back."

In addition, Lawrence says entrepreneurs should think out the document well in advance.

"You should do your homework and talk to people within the industry you are trying to get into," she adds. "Find a mentor."

Kerry Peacock is the senior vice-president of business banking for TD Canada Trust. She reveals that many entrepreneurs still fear the bank, especially during the loan process.

"For some people going to the bank is like going to the dentist," she says.

Instead she encourages prospective business owners to approach a financial advisor right away to find out what exactly is required at that bank to secure a loan. "It'll actually be a smoother process if you come in at the very beginning as opposed to when you want that line of credit," says Peacock.

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Learning Curve

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

Going green

Pg 20

RALF NAU/STONE

Graduating fashion design students from Kwantlen Polytechnic University are choosing to go green with their creations.

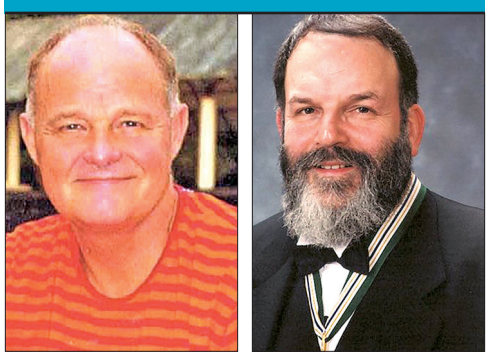
Pilot program

Pg 21

Joint initiative allows pupils to earn two types of credits.

Awards

Pg 23



British Columbians to be given top honours tonight.

Education

Pg 25

Foreign students balance courses, culture shock.

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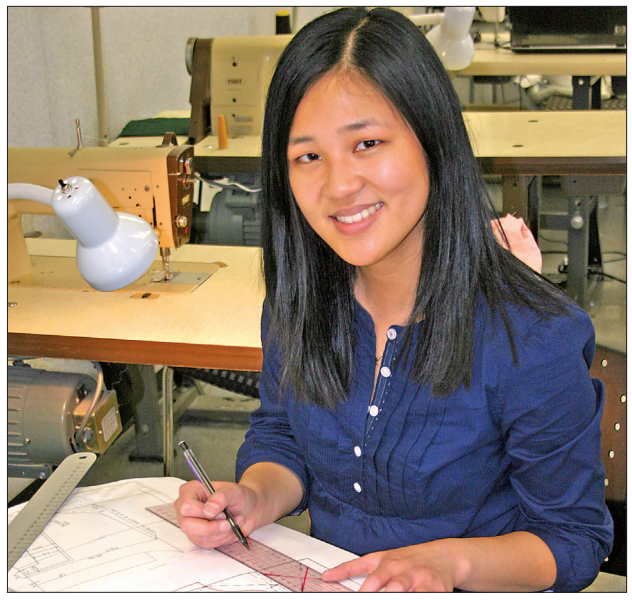

FROM LEFT: Nicole Ballash works on her line, Long Division, at Kwantlen Polytechnic University; Carolyn Chow designs items for her fashion line, kyle & liam; and Kwantlen fashion design instructor Sharon Greeno says her students graduate ready to grow the fashion industry. BELOW: Ballash and Chow are presenting their fashion lines at The Show at the River Rock Casino and Resort on April 1.

Modern fashion with a conscience

DOMINIQUE ARMAND
for Metro Vancouver

According to some graduating fashion design students at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, green is hot when it comes to fall fashion.

Carolyn Chow said the fashion industry is one of the highest polluting businesses in the world.

"With growing concerns for protecting the planet, clothing companies have no choice but to become more eco-friendly," the fourth-year student said.

Her line of boys' clothing, kyle & liam, uses organic and sustainable fabrics. Chow uses bamboo and organic cotton jersey knit for T-shirts and woven polyester, made from recycled PET, for outerwear.

Another graduating student, Nicole Ballash, designed her line, Long Division, using wool, cotton and bamboo.

"Natural fabrics last longer," Ballash said. "(They) hold their shape better, are more breathable and comfortable, and don't pill like polyesters."

Ballash added that she chose to use a bamboo cotton blend for knit shirts because it's comfortable but it's also a renewable resource.

In all, 27 graduating Kwantlen students are presenting their lines on April 1 during The Show, which will be held at the River Rock Casino and Resort in Richmond.

Students will also showcase eco-friendly bridal gowns, clothing for modern mothers on-the-go that make breast feeding easier and a line for sophisticated women who want to travel with style.

This will be the first class to graduate under Kwantlen's newly bestowed status as a university.

Instructor Sharon Greeno said her students' creations are ready to be marketed.

"Our students are industry ready and professional well before they graduate," she said.

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Partnership takes guess work out of post secondary

TARYN MCELHERAN
for Metro Vancouver

Simon Fraser University and Douglas College are launching a pilot program that will allow students to earn college and university credits simultaneously.

The program is the first of its kind in British Columbia.

Students will be able to move between the two schools while obtaining a 60-credit associate of arts degree from Douglas and/or a 120-credit BA degree from SFU.

The Douglas College credits will count toward their SFU degree.

Kate Ross, senior director and registrar at SFU, said educators studied existing programs, including a partnership between a college and university in Oregon.

"They found it to be very successful in terms of improving access for students of varying backgrounds," she said.

Simon Fraser University and Douglas College have teamed up to offer simultaneous credits to both institutions.

Ross added that Douglas College was a "natural choice" because it's an important university transfer partner with SFU.

"When you have a normal student transfer process, we don't see these students until they transfer here," Ross said. "But in this case what happens is we know who these students are and we can actually start to build a relationship with them in their Year 1."

The program also works as a confidence booster for students reluctant to attend university straight out of high school.

An online application process for the pilot program is being designed. SFU admission standards would apply.

"Once you're admitted, if you meet all the continuance policies then you continue to progress as if you were a student at both institutions," Ross said.

In the end students will be able to experience a taste of both university and college and make a choice that is most suitable for their lifestyle.

Facts and figures

- The pilot program will be accepting 75 students the first year, and will take more if the program is successful.
- Students' tuitions will be based on how many classes are taken at each school. If they have more classes at Douglas College more of the tuition will go toward them.
- The program will start off with majors in the faculty of arts and social sciences.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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STEPHEN CHERNIN/GETTY IMAGES

Men and women who play first-person shooter video games greatly improve their spatial abilities, research shows.

More than a video game

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

Having trouble assembling your barbecue, noticing things on the road or figuring out advanced geometry?

It might be time to load up the ol' shotgun, grab all the power-ups you can handle and head into the digital world to kill some zombies.

According to research by University of Toronto psychology professor Ian Spence and psychology doctoral student Jing Feng, playing first-person shooter video games can greatly improve spatial abilities in both men and women, with women showing the greatest degree of improvement.

"Play is very important for improving your brain."
Professor Ian Spence

Their research also found both sexes' increase in spatial ability was maintained even five months after having trained with the fast-paced games, regardless of whether the participant had continued to play first-person shooter games.

Spence says traditional research has shown that while men exhibit consistently weaker language acquisition and application skills, women are consistently not as skilled at spatial tasks such as real-time navigation or distinguishing between varieties of fast-moving objects.

Most experts believe this spatial disadvantage has traditionally influenced women to be less likely to enjoy things like engineering, mathematics and other fields that rely heavily on spatial perception, and that the divide stems from early evolution, as male hunters developed better spatial observation skills to avoid danger and help kill their prey.

"The ability to very quickly deploy attention to a situation and pick out things that change quickly in a cluttered environment is a very primitive, low-level thinking skill that would have been important to early survival," Spence said.

First-person shooter video games force players to use their perceptive skills in a high-intensity setting where enemies and foes have to be quickly distinguished, targets have to be neutralized with speed and accuracy, and reflexes have to be used in a way that tests a player's spatial ability. The results are like a high-impact training session for your spatial skills that Spence hopes could lead to more women feeling confident enough in their spatial skills to enjoy — and pursue — science and mathematics more.

Spence also hopes his research might in some way break the stigma that certain types of games and activities aren't meant for women.

"Play is very important for improving your brain and girls should be given more opportunities for the kind of play that could emphasize spatial skills. Even the smallest difference can lead to big consequences," Spence said.

Expectations need adjusting

The good news is that the big companies, banks and consulting firms are still coming to campus to recruit MBA students.

The bad news is that because firms are cutting their costs, they're not likely to hire as many students as they do in the boom times.

That means the coming crop of MBA students will have to compete even harder for the few jobs that are out there.

There's no question that companies are more conservative in their recruiting, said Jeff Muzzerall, director of the Corporate Connections Centre at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management.

"They're crossing all of their Ts and dotting all their Is. They want to make sure they're hiring absolutely the best for the fewer positions they have available, which means our students have to be all the more prepared and competitive and focused," Muzzerall said.

"It's important to know what game you're playing and to change with the game. The student is not in control in this environment."

It also means that students have to adjust their expectations.

"The banks and consulting firms that in a peak market would pay a $50,000 signing bonus now would pay $10,000," Muzzerall said. "And the smaller firms, nothing. Signing is your bonus in this market."

Still, the pace of the job hunt seems to be on track.

These days, about 30 per cent of the graduating MBA class have landed jobs for after graduation. That's the same as last year.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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- **PC Blue Menu Cookies** ($1.99 per 100g box of 5 packs) Available in oatmeal chocolate chip, ginger & lemon and cranberry orange.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Awards honour contribution to community

SAM SMITH
for Metro Vancouver

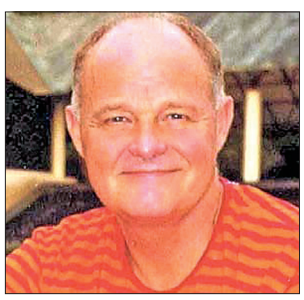
Forty-five recipients from all across the province are being given the B.C. Community Achievement Award tonight.

The recognition is handed out to those who have made a significant contribution to their community, ranging in anything from sports to business innovation.

Two of the recipients, Dr. Yosef Wosk and Sam Carter, spoke to Metro about their achievements.

Wosk, the director of interdisciplinary programs in the department of continuing studies at Simon Fraser University, is known as a philanthropist, teacher, rabbi, author, businessman, musician and the list goes on.

Dr. Yosef Wosk


Sam Carter

He founded The Philosophers' café, one of the largest series of café discussions in the world, as well as the Academy for Independent Scholars.

"I helped found close to 300 libraries," Wosk said. "Some larger ones but most of them are small community libraries."

On top of that, Wosk said he's been a major donor to museums, founded schools, started scholarships and given bursaries to students in Canada and worldwide.

"Those accomplishments are what added up to being recognized," Wosk said. "So I'm very grateful for that and at the same time it just reminds me that there's so much more to do."

Wosk plans on continuing his work with communities, such as changing the top two floors of the Vancouver Public Library into a "celebratory space for the city, like a crowning literary sky garden."

"This award is not like a final peak, it's a plateau for reflection and encouragement to continue."

Sam Carter, 65, is an artist, curator, educator, mentor and advocate for applied art and design.

He began his career in communities when he was a 21-year-old living in Ontario, starting programs aimed at helping the environment.

He has been a teacher at Emily Carr for 35 years, working to help communities around the globe get a hold of art supplies.

"I've expanded the notion of what art and design is and how it really affects the community in everyday life, that's what I'm getting the award for," Carter said. "I'm not getting an award because I'm an artist, I'm getting an award because I've integrated art and design education into everyday life."

Not only locally, but globally as well.

Carter has gone to poor communities in Africa and Ethiopia and given them their first use of the Internet, sometimes even a paintbrush.

After the Olympics, Carter is planning on retiring and focusing more on personal projects and helping more communities.

"I'm really honoured and a little bit surprised, but it is humbling."

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Commerce and Business Administration Accounting ▸ Business Administration ▸ Business Management ▸ Computing Science and Information Systems ▸ Financial Services Management ▸ Hotel and Restaurant Management ▸ Marketing Management ▸ Office Administration	Thurs, Mar 19	5pm	2201
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Performing Arts Music ▸ Stagecraft ▸ Theatre	Tues, Mar 17	5pm	A1470
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International education costly

Foreign students, who make up half of Canada's MBA enrolment, pay a high price

Paolo Delano was drawn to Canada as a peaceful land of opportunity.

Nikhil Mathai was looking for the right school.

Mehran Redjvani came here so his fiancée could be closer to her family.

About half of all MBA students in Canada are international students. Whatever brings them to this country, one thing is certain: An MBA program is an expensive endeavour. Fees for international students can run as much as $80,000, compared to $65,000 for their Canadian counterparts.

Add in living expenses and the tab can easily reach $100,000 for a one- or two-year program.

That's a lot of rupees. Just ask 26-year-old Siddharth Samarth.

"It's probably about five times the salary I would earn in a year over there," said Samarth, from India, who worked at a bank in Pune, India for about four years after completing his engineering degree.

> **"Honestly, I don't know if I've spent that much money in my entire life."**
> Siddharth Samarth

"Honestly, I don't know if I've spent that much money in my entire life."

After seeing businesses in a developing economy, he decided he wanted some perspective on how business is done in the West.

"I had a good job in India, a very comfortable life, but if you want to play the game at another level, then you need to be able to move yourself out of that comfort zone," Samarth said. "You need to be able to take that calculated risk. Some people would not have the stomach for it."

He is finishing his MBA at the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario.

Fees for international MBA students can run as much as $80,000, compared to $65,000 for their Canadian counterparts.

Samarth has accepted a job with CIBC's risk management group and will be starting in August. He hopes to be able to pay off his student loans in three or four years.

Nikhil Mathai was just looking for the right school. He wasn't picky about the country. The 26-year-old mechanical engineer from India was willing to go anywhere.

He selected the one-year program at Queen's School of Business at Queen's University because of small class sizes.

"Everyone in the office knows your name," he said. "There's a level of personal care here that I didn't really expect."

Mani Venkatakrishnaprasad, born in India and raised in Singapore, has an engineering degree. He came to Canada looking for opportunity.

What drew him to the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto was the school's emphasis on integrative thinking. This leadership model developed by Rotman's dean, Roger Martin, focuses on using opposing ideas to come up with a new idea that contains elements of each but is superior to both.

"At Rotman, each course builds on another," Venkatakrishaprasad said. "It means viewing a problem as a business problem, just not a strategy problem or an economics problem."

The focus on integrative thinking also drew classmate Paolo Delano from Mexico.

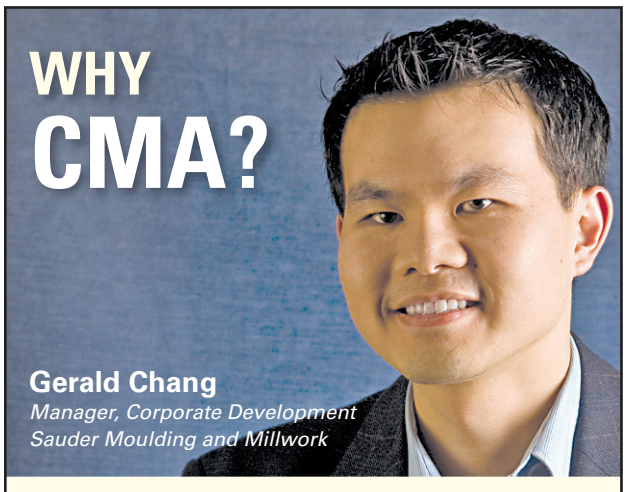
"It was something I had never seen before," he said. "When I compared it to other business schools, it seemed more modern. I wanted something that would give me an advantage once I was done."

Mehran Redjvani of Sydney, Australia, came to Canada so his fiancée could be closer to her family, but he figures Canada is the perfect place to start his own home health- care company.

He had never heard of the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario. But the more he learned, the more he liked the idea of the one-year program and the strength of the alumni network. He's been impressed by the steady stream of alumni, many of whom are directors of big corporations, or who have started their own companies.

"At first, I wondered, 'How important is this alumni network?' but since I've been here I've met so many people. Being taught by people like this and having access to them afterwards has been completely invaluable for me."

As a recent immigrant from India, Manju Rose likes the idea of being able to tap into Ivey's alumni network. "Being new to the country, that was selfishly one of the things I was looking for," she said. "Getting an MBA from a good school is one way of tapping into a huge resource. It would take many years in a country to make all the contacts that a year at Ivey could get you." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Earning the distinction of being the youngest Manager in his company's 80 year history, Gerald Chang's experience spans from being a Financial Analyst, to a Business Development Manager for a Beijing consulting company to his current position as Manager, Corporate Development with Sauder Moulding and Millwork. Gerald began the **CMA Program** in September 2007.

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Foreign students do double duty

Pupils balance school work with adapting to new city

LEYLA EMORY
for Metro Canada

International student Leonie Charlton has twice the work of her peers: The courses she's enrolled in and learning about the city in which they're offered.

"I had never been in winter before I came (to Canada)," says the Jamaican-born business student at Humber College in Toronto. "So the cold was a shock, but I liked the atmosphere, I liked the society and I liked how it's very accepting."

Charlton feels an international education puts her at an advantage. "We're not one of the more developed nations, so in order to get a better grasp of how business operates and get an international scope of what really happens outside of my little area, I wanted to choose a more post-industrial nation that is multicultural and accepting. Where you can grow in its society."

In turn, international students contribute to the growth of society, according to Michelle Suderman, associate director of international student development at the University of British Columbia.

"Students tell us they come away with a much better understanding of the way people in other parts of the world see an issue," Suderman says. "If they're in a class with Canadians and other international students, they're amazed at how many different ways there are at looking at the same problem."

For Christine Boake, a graduate of Parsons the New School for Design, studying in New York was less of a culture shock but equally rewarding. "You get to experience a different culture and learn to adapt to all its nuances," she says, "but you also represent your own country. I was always very proud that I was Canadian."

Both Boake and Charlton feel that completing a degree abroad puts them at an advantage in the job market. But learning away from home can be difficult.

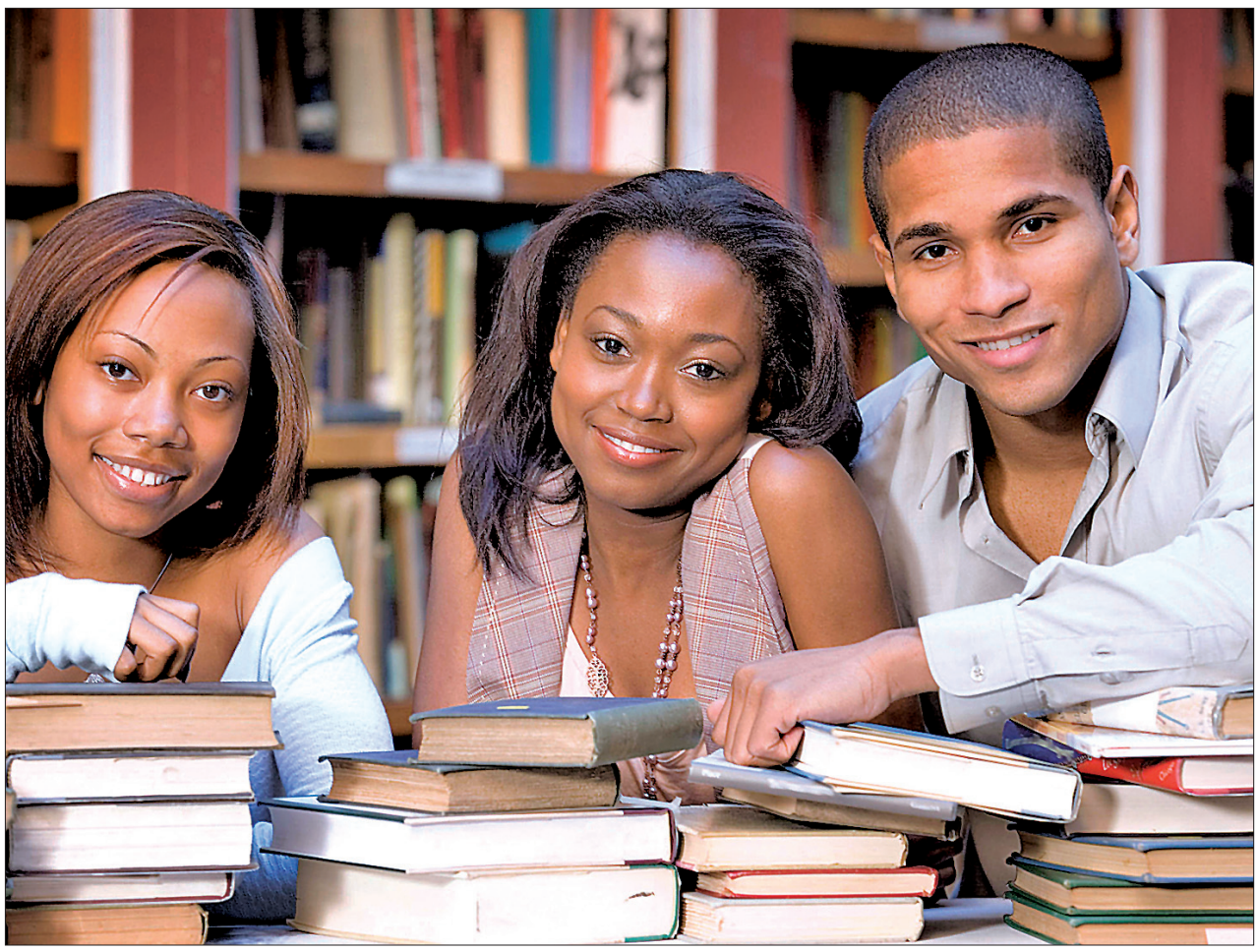
For Boake it was the constant upkeep of documentation to get in and out of the country. Charlton is finding her Caribbean work experience is not transferable to the Canadian job market.

> **"I had never been in winter before I came (to Canada)."**
> Leonie Charlton

For others, it's "getting used to a completely new way of living and often a completely different language," says Suderman. "Students tell us even small tasks like taking the bus can be complicated because they don't know they have to step down or ring the bell. There's a constant feeling of being a fish out of water."

But "feeling like a foreigner is an interesting experience in and of itself," says Boake.

It's part of the educations says Charlton: "Explore, get to know things, ask questions. There's never a silly question. If someone's laughing at you, fine. You learn from it."



International students have to adapt to the culture shock of living in a new country on top of taking on a full course load.

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ESL Programs Wednesday, March 11, 6 p.m. – room 1228	Broadway
Executive Assistant Wednesday, March 11, 4 p.m. – room 618	Downtown
Occupational / Physical Therapist Wednesday, March 11, 1 p.m. – room 4205 Thursday, March 12, 4 p.m. – room 4205	Broadway
Administrative Assistant Thursday, March 12, 4 p.m. – room 618	Downtown
Culinary Arts Friday, March 13 and 20, 9:30 a.m. – room 305B	Downtown
Automotive Collision Repair Technician Monday, March 16 and 23, 10 a.m. Collision Body Shop	Broadway
Nursing Unit Clerk Wednesday, March 18, 5 p.m. – room 3221	Broadway
ESL Homefront Learning - Volunteer Tutoring Wednesday, March 18, 7 p.m. – room 3709	Broadway
Counselling Skills Certificate Program Tuesday, March 24, 6:30 p.m. – room 420	Downtown
Substance Abuse Certificate Program Tuesday, March 24, 6:30 p.m. – room 420	Downtown

Downtown campus, is located at 200-block Dunsmuir at Hamilton (two blocks west of Stadium SkyTrain station).

Broadway campus, is located at 1155 E. Broadway.

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National Engineering Month is aimed at showing youth how diverse and fun engineering can be. Jobs in the field can range from structural engineering to doing research in a lab.

Engineers put focus on future

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

March is National Engineering Month and the theme this year is Designing the Future. The head of Engineers Canada says the focus on kids aged eight to 14 is to show them how diverse and fun engineering can be.

"National Engineering Month shows students how, through engineering, they can make a difference and help to shape the world in which we live," said CEO Chantal Guay. "By effectively introducing the nation's youth to engineering, we are both strengthening our profession and helping to sustain and enhance the skills needed for Canada to compete in a global, knowledge-based economy."

Events across the country included Igloo building, artwork, essay contests and impromptu design challenges (go to New-sng.com for a full list of events). It's also highlighting the range of places engineering can take you.

Julie Payette of Montreal has taken her engineering degree into outer space. She was selected by the Canadian Space Agency in 1992 to be a technical adviser for the Mobile Servicing System, the robotic system Canada contributes to the International Space Station. She joined the Discovery mission for 10 days in space in 1996.

Katie Krause, MSc, P.Eng, has gone the other way with her studies. The PhD student is exploring the very small through nanotechnology. Reached at her lab at the University of Alberta, she explained her work on material sciences.

"It means studying different metals, glasses and organic materials and how they can be formed into tiny structures," she said. Her team develops "thin films" that could be used to cover windows to keep out harmful UV light. She's also working on a thin film that changes colour when exposed to carbon monoxide, which could be a life-saving safety device one day.

Young people who are creative, good at math and science, and who like to build new things are likely to thrive as engineers. After focusing on math and science in high school, students should enroll in an engineering program accredited by Canadian Council of Professional Engineers. There are more than 30 programs in Canada; go to New-sng.com and click on Education for a list.

After that, budding engineers need to register with their provincial engineers association to apply for a licence. After three or four years of supervised work, they can take the exam. If they pass, they can finally add the "P. Eng." to their name.

Quit smoking with help from your PDA
At pda.ahrq.gov/consumer/qscit/qscit.htm, you can sign up for a five-day countdown to prep you for the big day, plus support. It'll be sent to your PalmPilot or BlackBerry to keep you on track. **BEST HEALTH MAGAZINE**

Health & Beauty

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Dealing with recession stress

Catch signs early and seek out social support, exercise, say experts

DENISE SURETTE
for Metro Canada

Recession stress is affecting everybody. Whether you're a business owner, a student with a part-time job or unemployed — money is on everyone's mind.

There isn't much we can do about the recession, but we can change the way it affects us.

Riding the **Recession**

"During recessions, people recognize they're having difficulty with sleep and appetite," says Dr. Eilenna Denisoff, team leader for the work stress and health program for the Centre of Addictions and Mental Health in Toronto. The centre is the leading Canadian research hospitals for mental health.

Losing your job is one of life's most serious stress factors, along with divorce, death of a loved one and relocating your family. Making sure you stay mentally healthy during tough times is important to stay on top of your game.

Denisoff says to look for a few key indicators of stress in your self, or loved ones, to identify if they're suffering from more stress than usual. Chest pain, using alcohol or drugs, difficulty sleeping or eating, rapid heartbeat and irritability — all are early symptoms of stress.

Catching early signs of stress is important to save yourself from more serious problems down the road, such as anxiety and depression.

"Don't wait until it's too late, when work, sleep and relationships are suffering," says Denisoff.

So how do you deal with recession stress?

"Seek out social support, connect with friends, talk with friends and family that make you feel better, not worse," say Denisoff.

ISTOCK PHOTO

Chest pain, difficulty sleeping or eating and irritability are all symptoms of stress. Detecting these signs early is important.

Exercise is also great destressor, says Denisoff. Besides the mood-elevating endorphins, exercise can be a great way to take your mind off your worries and improve your health and self-esteem.

If you or your partner are feeling the effects of work stress, support each other with small acts of kindness.

"Acknowledge it's a stressful time in a gentle way," says Denisoff. "Offer to help prepare a meal or suggest a walk together, rent a funny movie or go out with friends."

If stress becomes deeper or more intense, professional help from a psychologist or counsellor is an option to vent and receive advice on coping with life's rough patches.

Small steps can help lessen the load. Even if you can't change the economic climate, you can change your attitude.

De-stress tips

Five inexpensive ways to destress:
- Go for a brisk walk
- Rediscover your local library
- Take a guilt-free power nap
- Play with your dog or cat
- Start a journal

(Tips courtesy of helpguide.org)

DENISE SURETTE/ FOR METRO CANADA

o.b.'s new tampon purse pack.

A practical, petite purse accessory

FEMININE HYGIENE Are you the type of fashionista that is always onto the latest accessory? If so, perhaps the new tampon purse pack is for you.

Offering more practicality than a new pair of earrings or leggings, these cute new cases (tiny enough to fit in the palm of your hand), are a must-have purse staple.

Available in hot pink, electric blue, teal and black, the purse pack will protect your tampons against lint, eyeliner smudges and other make-up bag mishaps.

The best part is you can get a free sample by visiting o.b.'s website at mightysmall.com.

METRO NEWS SERVICE

Should you stay or should you go?

The J Spot

Josey Vogels

metronews.ca/thejspot

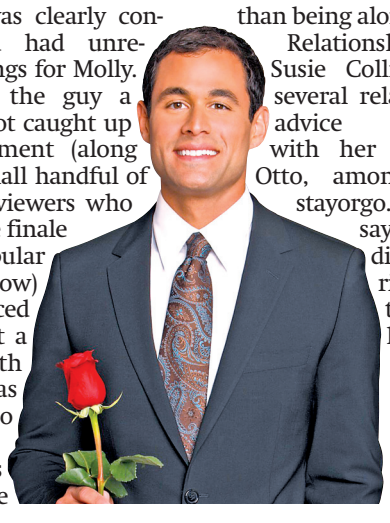
I don't understand why everyone got so mad at Jason. Okay, so maybe The Bachelor shouldn't have proposed to Melissa on national television when he was clearly conflicted and had unresolved feelings for Molly.

But give the guy a break. He got caught up in the moment (along with the small handful of 17 million viewers who watched the finale of the popular reality show) and convinced himself that a lifetime with Melissa was the way to go.

And it's not like he turned around the next day and ditched her. It was six months later. A lot can happen in six months. Would you rather he stay in the relationship, even marry Melissa, simply because he said he would on national TV?

Because, goodness knows, far too many of us stay in relationships way beyond their due date. We come up with all kinds of excuses to hang on: He's not so bad … It's better than being alone …

Relationship coach Susie Collins runs several relationship advice websites with her husband Otto, among them stayorgo.com. She says Jason did the right thing by listening to his heart and not trying to make a relationship work that was doomed to fail — especially when his heart was saying, "Be with Molly."



Left: Bachelor star Jason Mesnick.

"It's amazing how many of us are content to stay stuck in limbo about their relationship."
Susie Collins, relationship coach

Jason said there were warning signs telling him Melissa had similar characteristics to women he'd been with before — and those relationships hadn't worked out. These are good signs to heed, says Collins. If you can't decide whether or not it's worth sticking it out with someone when you're having doubts, ask yourself if your partner is similar to those in past relationships that haven't worked out. In other words, are you making the same mistakes over and over again — only with different people?

And because there is some truth to that old adage: It's not you, it's me, Collins suggests you ask yourself some tough personal questions before dragging someone else along for a ride to nowhere, such as: Why are you in the relationship at all? What are you afraid of if you stay? If you go?

"If you don't invest some quality time now in taking an honest and truthful look at the state of your relationship, you could stay stuck in this place of indecision for a very long time," says Collins. "It's amazing how many of us are content to stay stuck in limbo about their relationship."

Especially given most of us don't even have the threat of being humiliated and scorned on national TV to stop us from doing something about it.

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

Health in brief

GERMS Mobile phones used by hospital healthcare workers are often contaminated with germs, including those that can causes illness in hospitalized patients, a Turkish research team reports. Dr. Fatma Ulger and others at Ondokuz Mayis University, Samsun, swabbed the dominant hand and the mobile phones of 200 doctors, nurses, and other healthcare staff.

WEIGHT Carrying excess weight around the middle can impair lung function, adding to a long list of health problems associated with belly fat, French researchers said recently. Abdominal obesity is already linked with diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease as part of a cluster of health problems known collectively as metabolic syndrome.

REUTERS

IS CHRONIC KNEE OR HIP PAIN DUE TO OSTEOARTHRITIS SLOWING YOU DOWN?

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Anderson has runway malfunction

Pamela Anderson accidentally flashed her breasts while walking for Vivienne Westwood in Paris. The actress and model suffered a wardrobe malfunction on the runway, as her black dress slipped down to reveal her nipple to a shocked audience, reports the Daily Mail. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Entertainment

New neighbour

The CW has reportedly signed a deal for Ashlee Simpson-Wentz to move into Melrose Place. She plans to return to TV as a small-town girl who arrives in Los Angeles with a big secret. PEOPLE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

The business of new music

More than 500 musicians from around the globe hit the stage at Canadian Music Week

IAN NATHANSON
for Metro Canada

Among the hundreds of bands, solo artists and such who congregate at Canadian Music Week festivities each year, all share one common premise: Getting noticed — by the right people, in the right place, at the right opportune moment.

And if attempts to stand out in a crowd of some 500 Canadian, U.S. and international artists sound too daunting a task, CBC Radio 3 personality Grant Lawrence suggests a much simpler approach to the four-day music festival, which runs tomorrow through to Saturday: The networking opportunities are just too good to pass up.

"Instead of just having artists constantly touring, which can get to be very expensive, CMW brings the industry all together in one city as a one-stop shop of panel discussions, live showcases and meetings with the music industry

Canadian **Music Week**

folk," says the Vancouver-based Lawrence, whose satellite radio programs and podcasts for CBC Radio 3 offer one of the few strong mediums in Canada to promote independent talent.

You could be any one of West Coasters Vancougar, East Coasters Hey Rosetta! or already famous names — Sloan, Burton Cummings or Anvil — showcasing, curiously witnessing unfamiliar acts, schmoozing with record label execs or taking part in panel discussions with radio industry folk. If lucky enough, they can all sit in to hear legendary Kiss bassist Gene Simmons deliver a keynote speech.

Lawrence also points out that CMW can often be utilized as a stepping stone to appearing at other prestigious music festivals such as South By Southwest (SXSW) in Austin, Texas or New York City's CMJ Music Marathon.

CBC Radio 3 host Grant Lawrence, above, says CMW can be a stepping stone to other festivals. It's also an opportunity for acts like B.C.'s Vancougar, left, to show their stuff.

"It can only have a positive effect for those participating, so it's practically a necessity to be there," Lawrence says.

From the perspective of performers, fresh-faced talent should make the most of the networking aspects CMW offers, according to broadcaster, researcher and former Canadian bureau chief of Billboard magazine Larry LeBlanc.

"You need to target a booking agent and a manager with two or three artists ... and try to find acts that stylistically complement with what you do and suggest a co-venture," LeBlanc says.

For the music fan, the plethora of talent appearing at CMW would go against the grain of reported suggestions that the music industry is on its death knell.

In this Internet-friendly era, the added power of online promotion — whether aided by Lawrence's shows, worldwide exposure via YouTube and MySpace or mere chats between friends — assures the likes of Edmonton's quirky pop-rockers Hot Panda establish as loyal a fan base as Montreal trip-rock duo Beast.

"A lot of people out there would be quick to say that the music today is worse now than it was years ago. I have a problem with that belief," LeBlanc says. "If you look hard enough, there's a ton of great music being made."

B.C. acts at CMW

- Hannah Georgas
- Japandroids
- Vancougar

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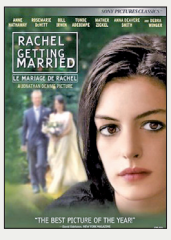
metro

DVD picks

Rachel Getting Married

Director: Jonathan Demme



WEDDINGS MAY be festive occasions but they're not always happy ones.

Especially in the case of a Connecticut family whom director Jonathan Demme and screenwriter Jenny Lumet invite us to view like buzzards circling roadkill. Rachel (Rosemarie DeWitt) is the bride, but there's an awkward thorn in her bouquet. It's sister Kym (Anne Hathaway), who emerges from rehab just before the big day, demanding to be maid of honour and bent on making a scene.

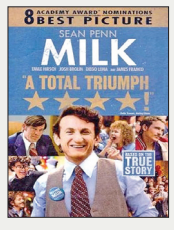
The more serious threat is the past tragedy that hovers over the clan.

There's not a whole lot of story here, but the slowly revealed family history is like a festering wound. Hathaway's brilliant performance justifiably earned her an Oscar nomination.

Rachel Getting Married is like life: always moving, forever unpredictable and forever getting in the way of best-laid plans.

Milk

Director: Gus Van Sant



TWO REMARKABLE transformations are at the heart of Gus Van Sant's affecting portrait of Harvey Milk, the slain 1970s San Francisco politician and civil rights icon. First and foremost is Sean Penn's title performance, which recently won him his second Oscar. Here he's hope personified, easily adopting his subject's ready smile and very much resembling the first openly gay politician in California's history.

The other impressive transformation is director Van Sant. As a gay man himself, Van Sant might have been expected to elevate his subject beyond the near-sainthood status accorded him from his 1978 assassination at the hands of a deranged politician.

Instead he takes the more honest and dramatically satisfying route. He astutely uses documentary footage to remind viewers of how unliberated the 1970s really were.

Penn portrays Milk as a flawed and self-interested man for whom personal epiphany came slowly, but who experienced a history-altering "road to Damascus" moment when it did.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Museum cranks out history of British rock

MUSIC Rock-and-rollers have a new place to unleash their inner guitar hero and hear how British bands like the Beatles, Led Zeppelin and The Clash roared their way across the Atlantic to make musical history.

The British Music Experience in London, uses video, memorabilia and exhibits to trace Britain's musical history following World War II with in-depth looks at genres ranging from skiffle to reggae to punk, blues and urban.

An interactive studio featuring Gibson guitars, drum kits, keyboards and a vocal studio also encourages visitors to pick up and play the instruments to live the rock-and-roll dream for themselves.

"Finally we have a home for the amazing and rich talent we have spawned over the past 60 years," said Harvey Goldsmith, the museum's chairman. REUTERS

Martha Stewart's puppy dies in blast
Martha Stewart is mourning the loss of her beloved Chow Chow, Ghenghis Khan, who died in a deadly propane explosion at a kennel in Pennsylvania on Friday. **USMAGAZINE.COM**

Designs that work

Stella McCartney showcases mature collection

Stella McCartney injected some masculinity into her signature soft, feminine designs with belted spray-print dresses and tapered trousers yesterday, adding to a string of Paris collections courting the working woman.

Faced with the end of the luxury boom, designers at Paris Fashion Week have moved from party frocks for socialites towards more wearable, sellable clothes — although McCartney brushed off questions about the impact of the economic crisis.

"What crisis?" she said after her show, laughing before turning away to discuss the thigh-high faux leather boots and lace-and-wool dresses in her collection.

While the British designer has long been known for her flattering silhouettes, there has been a broader trend towards grown-up fashion, from Karl Lagerfeld's strong-shouldered coats to big-shouldered blue cardigans at Emanuel Ungaro.

PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY IMAGES

Designer Stella McCartney, centre, poses backstage with models after her show during Paris Fashion Week yesterday.

Most of the power suits, knee-length skirts and subtly sexy dresses with lace inserts shown in Paris over the past few days could have been worn by the buyers and editors in the front row — unlike the micro-minis and bra tops of past seasons.

"I thought it was fabulous — very mature and chic, and inventive with those boots."
Paul McCartney

"I'd like to give women something they get noticed in but won't be overwhelmed by," McCartney said.

Her father, Paul McCartney, was beaming proudly from the front row. "I thought it was fabulous — very mature and chic, and inventive with those boots," he said, adding that his daughter sometimes designed his stage suits.

Many American buyers, usually a visible presence at the Milan and Paris shows, have stayed away from the autumn/winter shows, preferring to order online or over the phone. **REUTERS**

Breaking Bad: TV as God intended

REVIEW It's difficult to fathom a more dangerous and enthralling piece of television than Breaking Bad, the AMC drama that returned for Season 2 on Sunday.

It broke from the starting gate last year like a gunshot to the temple, grabbing viewers by the throat and letting go only when the Hollywood writers strike interceded to slice two episodes from its first-season order of nine. But creator-producer-writer Vince Gilligan hardly seems to have been thrown off-stride to behold the first three hours of Season 2, which take us to a dark, chilling place rarely visited on the small screen.

Star Bryan Cranston, the surprise lead actor winner at last year's Emmys, has raised his game even higher, leaving no trace of the goofball Malcolm in the Middle dad. This is television as God intended.

The Breaking Bad story line casts the brilliant Cranston as a pathetic high school chemistry teacher named Walt White who — upon learning he's dying of lung cancer — chucks it all to become a crystal meth chef in a mobile lab with a perpetually irritated ne'er-do-well former student, Jesse (the terrific Aaron Paul), to make enough money to provide for his family after he's gone.

That family includes a pregnant all-American blonde wife (Anna Gunn) and an adolescent son afflicted with cerebral palsy (RJ Mitte). **REUTERS**

Entertainment in brief

FILM Tracy Morgan and Martin Lawrence are joining Chris Rock in a remake of the ensemble comedy Death at a Funeral. Neil LaBute will direct the Screen Games release. **REUTERS**

AUDITIONS CBC Television's Dragon's Den is holding auditions for its fourth season. Visit cbc.ca/dragonsden for audition information and locations. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Watchmen No. 1 around world

BOX OFFICE Watchmen easily finished No. 1 at the weekend box office overseas, mirroring its North American bow. Director Zack Snyder's superhero fantasy, the first big worldwide launch of 2009, grossed an estimated $27.5 million from 45 markets. Its tally is the biggest since Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa earned $31.1 million in early January. **REUTERS**

GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt

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metronews.ca/movies

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VA	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 3/10/09	251	308	3	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Rick Mercer	22 Minutes	Wild Roses "Boom and Bust"		CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	255	358	6	JOY	E! News	The Insider	The Biggest Loser (N) (CC)				Dr. 90210 "Slice of Life" (N)		News (N)
	254	-	8	M	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Omni News: Mandarin Edition		News: Cantonese Edition		Omni News: Punjabi Edition		Metropia
	250	321	9	CTV	etalk (CC)	Hollywood	American Idol Top 12 finalists perform. (CC)				Law & Order: SVU		News (N)
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	252	336	11	GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	NCIS "Heartland" (CC)		90210 "By Accident" (CC)		Project Runway Canada (N)		News (N)
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	289	381	15	CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	NCIS "Heartland" (CC)		The Mentalist "Red Handed"		(:01) Without a Trace (CC)		News (N)
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	-	-	23	KVOS	M*A*S*H	Seinfeld	Miami Blues ★★★ (1990) Alec Baldwin, Fred Ward.				King	Still Standing	Scrubs (CC)
	291	383	27	PBS	Tough Times-Financial Crisis		Alone in the Wilderness (CC) (DVS)			Elvis Lives: The 25th Anniversary Concert			Magnificent
	290	382	28	FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	American Idol Top 12 finalists perform. (Same-day Tape)				News (N) (CC)		Family Guy
	-	364	43	PBS	(6:00) Great Performances		My Music: Doo Wop Love Songs				Suze Orman: Women & Money (CC)		
	296	654	34	SBK	Frasier (CC)	Frasier (CC)	Punk'd (CC)	South Park	Cheers (CC)	Half & Half	The Insider	Entertainment	Houses For
	298	653	65	TLA	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Reaper "Dirty Sexy Mongol"		90210 "By Accident" (CC)		KTLA Prime News (N) (CC)		Friends (CC)
	295	651	66	WGN	WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		Family Guy	Two/Half Men	According-Jim	Sex and-City	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	My Wife-Kids
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news	502	390	26	NW	Twelve Moving to Canada. (N)		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National		Twelve Moving to Canada.		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
sports	407	419	22	RSP	Baseball World Classic -- Teams TBA. From Mexico City. (Live)						Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30	TSN	Curling: Tim Hortons Brier		SportsCentre (Live) (CC)		UEFA Champions League Soccer Juventus vs. Chelsea.				SportsCentre
	411	457	49	OLN	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman (CC)		Mantracker "Simone & Mike"		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman
	410	403	54	SCR	Score Tonight		Hardcore Hockey Talk		Poker 888.com UK Open.		Final Score	Final Score	Final Score
	417	406	55	SC	Hot Import	Hot Import	Pimp My Ride	Pass Time	Low Life	Low Life	Super Bikes!	Super Bikes!	Hot Import
	416	409	144	GLF	Fútbol Colombiano		Gol TV News		Hallo Bundesliga		Paid Program	Gol TV News	Gol TV News
family	552	543	25	YTV	Adrenaline	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Family Biz	Prank Patrol	Falcon Beach (CC)		Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50	TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	American Dad	Chicken	American Dad	Moral Orel
	557	541	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
	553	546	56	TRE	Comfy Couch	Zigby	Max & Ruby	Babar (CC)	Backyard	Dora-Explorer	Go, Diego, Go!	Franklin	Comfy Couch
cable variety	268	354	5	KNO	Gardens	Recreat. Eden	Martin Clunes: Man and Dogs		Martin Clunes: Man and Dogs		A Promise To The Dead		No More
	575	583	20	CMT	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	CMT's Top 20 Tearjerkers		Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Reba (CC)	Reba (CC)	Hope & Faith
	570	580	24	MM	Degrassi: TNG	Instant Star	The Shift		Redemption	Redemption	Technical Diff.	Video on Trial	Video on Trial
	600	564	29	H&G	Colin & Justin's Home Heist		Holmes on Homes (CC)		Sarah's House	Design Inc.	Pure Design	Style	Colin-Justin
	615	520	31	A&E	Manhunters	Manhunters	Manhunters	Manhunters	The First 48 (CC)		The First 48 (CC)		Manhunters
	628	584	32	SPKE	DEA "Flip The Stripper" (N)		Real Vice	Real Vice	CSI: NY "Boo" (CC)		Disorderly Conduct: Video		Real Vice
	521	560	34	TLC	Toddlers & Tiaras (CC)		17 Kids-Count	17 Kids-Count	17 Kids and Counting (CC)		Toddlers & Tiaras (CC)		Kids by Dozen
	616	522	39	SHO	The Outer Limits (CC)		Mutant X "Dark Star Rising"		Testees (CC)	Trailer Park	The L Word (CC)		House (CC)
	620	523	40	BVO	Johnny Cash	Glee Club	Law & Order "Mother's Day"		Without a Trace "Stolen"		Pio and the Cracks (CC)		
	601	562	41	SLC	Rich Bride, Poor Bride (CC)		ET Canada	Til Debt-Part	Real Housewives OC		Trading Spouses		Paradise Hotel
	520	505	42	DIS	Combat School (CC)		Daily Planet (CC)		Destroyed	Time Warp	Combat School (CC)		How It's Made
	522	506	44	HIS	NCIS "Dead Man Talking"		Ultimate Engineering (CC)		Crime Stories (CC)		NCIS "Dead Man Talking"		Sea Hunters
	627	528	45	SPC	(:05) Destination Truth (N)		Stargate SG-1 "The Curse"		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Star Trek: Voyager (CC)		Star Trek: Ent.
	294	650	47	TBS	The Office	The Office	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Lethal Weapon 2 ★★★ (1989, Action) (PA) Mel Gibson, Danny Glover. (CC)				
	619	525	48	TROP	Planet Soap	Big Screen	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy	Married... With	Seinfeld
	603	561	52	FN	Good Eats	Good Eats	Iron Chef America (CC)		Challenge Sugar showpieces.		The F Word (CC)		Good Eats
	626	547	57	COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs (CC)		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	S. Silverman	Flt.-Conchords	Daily Show
	320	621	60	CEN	(6:25) Breakfast With Scot		Past Lies (2008) Nicole Eggert. Premiere.			Three Can Play That Game (2008) (CC)			Starter for Ten
	581	566	101	MTV	From G's to Gents (CC)		MTV Live	After	The Girls of Hedsor Hall		From G's to Gents (CC)		MTV Live
	261	394	102	V	I Prophesy	Supernatural	Poltergeist: The Legacy		Edward Scissorhands ★★★ (1990) Johnny Depp. (CC)				Paid Program
	-	-	109	MUL	Eight Heroes	Mom's-Upset	Il Caffe		In Germany	Euromaxx	Schauplatz	Euro. Journal	Patrol World

critics' corner

Wild Roses
And up from the ground come a-bubblin' crude. Oil, that is. Black gold. Texas tea. OK, Alberta tea, in this case. Will (Steve Byers) drops a bombshell on the Henrys: Yes, there is oil under Rivercross. Now the question becomes, how should they get it out? And for that matter, should they? Gary Hudson and Adam MacDonald also star in the new episode "Boom and Bust." 9 PM on CBC

The Biggest Loser
After a pop challenge that adds an interesting twist to the weigh-in, the contestants compete in a relay race, with the winning team getting 24 hours of luxury. Some contestants are unable to resist temptation during the getaway, however. One contestant has it out with the trainer. 8 PM on JOY NBC STR

Without a Trace
This Secret Service agent's got one secret too many. When a federal agent's teenage son disappears, the Missing Persons Squad and new boss Clark Medina (Steven Weber) are on the case and uncover a long-held family secret with potentially deadly ramifications. 10:01 PM on CBS VI

Kylie slated for fire benefit

Kylie Minogue, who is currently filming a Bollywood movie in Mumbai, is hotly tipped to headline the Sound Relief benefit shows in Sydney and Melbourne for the victims of bushfires and floods in her native Australia this weekend. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Celebrity Buzz

Chris Brown to cut a plea deal?

LEGAL Chris Brown reportedly wants to cut a deal with prosecutors in the case over his alleged assault of Rihanna.

Sources tell TMZ Brown would plea only to a misdemeanour and with no jail time. The sources say legal consultants have suggested that Rihanna's own aggression during the February incident mean that Brown should not be charged with a felony.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

'He will hit you again,' Oprah warns Rihanna

SCANDAL Oprah Winfrey gave a stern warning to Rihanna, who has taken back Chris Brown (who has been charged with two felonies for assaulting her last month), usmagazine.com reports.

"Both Chris Brown and Rihanna, if I were your friend, I'd call you up and say, 'Give it some time. Get yourself some counseling. Take care of yourself. Heal yourself first,'" said Winfrey, who will dedicate a program this week to discussing domestic violence for "all the Rihannas of the world."

Looking directly into the camera, Winfrey added during Friday's episode of her talk show, "If a man hits you once, he will hit you again. He will hit you again."

Echoed Gayle King, "If you guys want to get back together, I'm OK with that. But at least take some time. I am so worried she is sending the wrong message to the young fans. And him, too!"

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jessica 'dukes' it out

PEOPLE Remember all that weight gain hoopla surrounding Jessica Simpson a month or so ago? The singer seems to have wiped them out in the single donning of a pair of short-shorts, a la her Daisy Dukes character from The Dukes of Hazzard movie, popeater.com reports.

At her Florida show on Sunday night, Simpson strutted the stage in her short-shorts.

In January, Simpson's high-waisted jeans and apparent weight gain made headlines across the country.

Simpson spoke out against the criticism at a concert shortly after the weight stories began, saying: "I feel like in our world today we focus on so many things that are completely pointless."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Amy's comeback derailed

CAREER Amy Winehouse has hit a hurdle in her hopes for a musical comeback, people.com reports.

The troubled singer has been forced to cancel her appearance next month at California's Coachella Music Festival because of the charges she faces in London over an an alleged assault last September.

When she answered police bail last week and was formally charged, her management assumed that her legal case would not "be sorted out in time" for her to make the music fest.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Paris pulls a Vanilli?

PEOPLE Paris Hilton was left humiliated at her birthday party in Las Vegas after her new lover Dough Reinhardt exposed her lip-synching, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

A source said of her performance of her song Stars Are Blind: "Paris was really going all-out to impress Doug until he took the mike off her and the singing just carried on. Everyone in the club thought it was hilarious."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Twins have blond moment

PEOPLE Hugh Hefner's latest girlfriends, twins Karissa and Kristina Shannon, offered to help out with 2008 Playmate of the Year Jayde Nicole's charity, Lengths of Love, by donating some of their hair to make wigs and help raise cancer awareness.

Only one problem: The twins' bleach-blond hair is apparently no good. "The hair used has to be healthy enough to be re-treated and not too over-processed," Nicole tells Fox News.

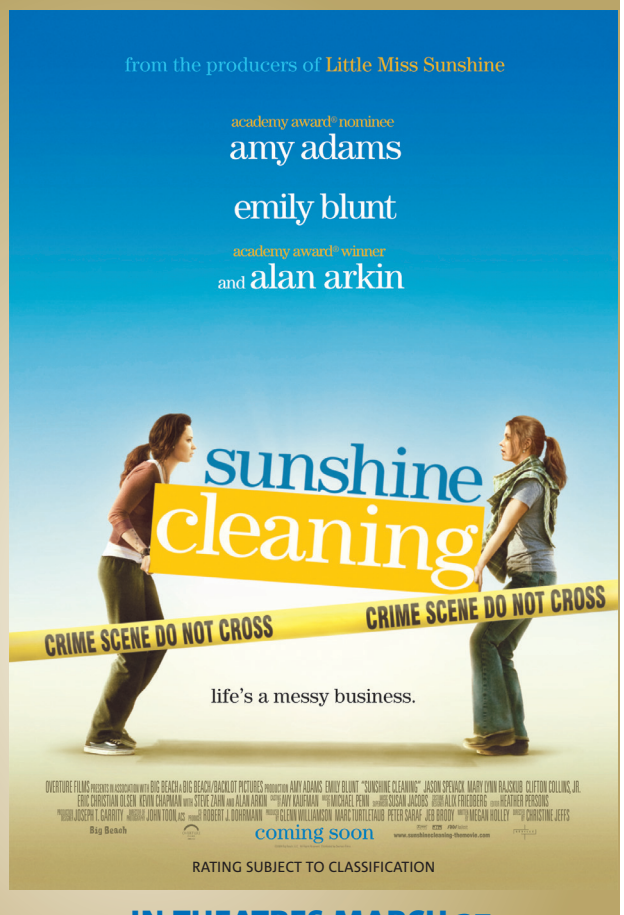
METRO NEWS SERVICES

YOU COULD

WIN

A DOUBLE PASS TO AN ADVANCE SCREENING OF

sunshine cleaning



IN THEATRES MARCH 27

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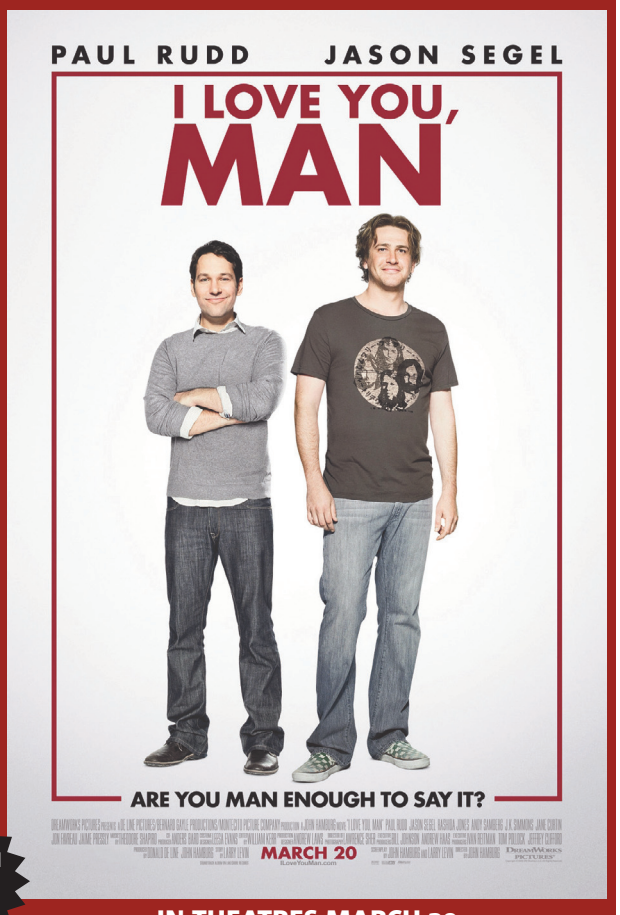
metro

YOU COULD

WIN

A DOUBLE PASS TO AN ADVANCE SCREENING of I LOVE YOU, MAN ON MARCH 18TH!



CELEBRATE NATIONAL MAN DATE DAY ON THURSDAY MARCH 19

IN THEATRES MARCH 20

VISIT METRONEWS.CA AND ENTER FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!

No purchase necessary. One entry per person. Contest open to Canadian residents of legal age, excluding residents of Quebec. Contest closes March 13, 2009. Odds of winning depend on number of entries received. For full contest rules and details, visit www.metronews.ca.

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Wednesday Mainly sunny 3° / -3°
Thursday Partly cloudy 6° / 0°

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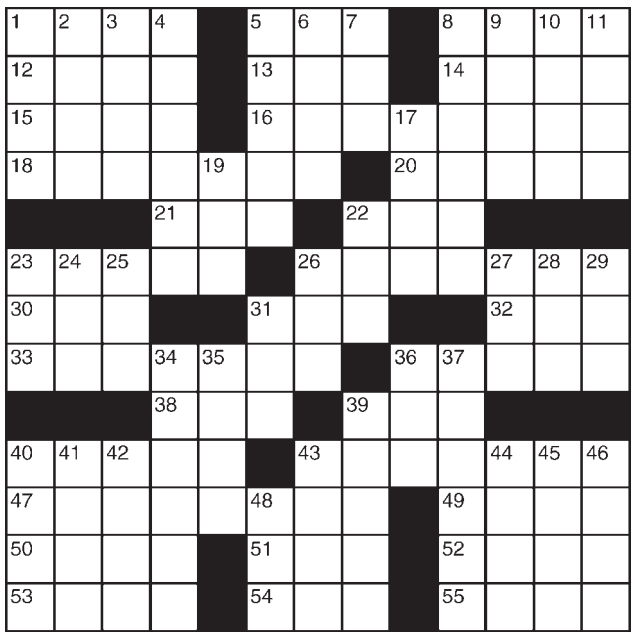

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

1				2				6
7		9		4		3		8
		4	1		8	2		
3								2
				4				
					7			
5								4
		7	3		2	8		
8		2		6		5		9
4				9				7

Crossword across

1 Coffin stand
5 Mayberry mail abbr.
8 Rams fans?
12 Run easily
13 Barcelona bravo
14 Speck
15 Ear-related
16 Resoluteness
18 Tasks as yet undone
20 Fuzzbuster's find
21 So five minutes ago
22 Supporting
23 Word on the street?
26 Spoke spitefully about
30 "— the ramparts ..."
31 Cowboy nickname
32 Blond shade
33 Excavating machine
36 Abdomen
38 Dinner for Dobbin
39 Sass
40 As cross as —
43 Illuminated from behind
47 Setting
49 Franc replacement
50 Grades K through 12
51 Historic time
52 Oklahoma city
53 "Vaya con —"
54 Shriner's hat
55 Mexican money

Crossword down

1 Amorphous sci-fi villain
2 Tittle
3 Grand story
4 Believe
5 Automaton
6 Banner
7 Xmas time
8 Set off on a journey
9 Lumber
10 Sicilian spouter
11 Palm reader, e.g.
17 McDonald's founder Ray
19 Drag wearily
22 Office transmission
23 Blubber
24 Meadow
25 Curved line
26 Spelling contest
27 Emeril's shout
28 Doctrine
29 Command-ment possessive
31 Plaything
34 Some military garb
35 Difficult
36 Spasm
37 Maintenance
39 Bolivian city
40 Sleeping
41 Indonesian island
42 Reverberate
43 Unwanted guest, maybe
44 "Clair de —"
45 Rainbow
46 Commotion
48 Ump

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

S	T	U	D	■	V	I	C	■	O	V	A	L		
L	U	K	E	■	E	V	E	■	P	E	R	U		
A	B	E	T	■	H	E	L	L	E	N	I	C		
W	A	S	A	B	I	■	L	O	R	D	L	Y		
■	■	■	C	E	C	A	■	M	A	E	■	■		
M	I	C	H	E	L	L	E	■	S	T	A	G		
B	A	R	■	P	E	P	Y	S	■	T	R	A		
A	N	E	W	■	S	H	E	L	L	A	C	S		
■	■	■	D	O	H	■	A	B	E	L	■	■	■	■
S	T	I	R	U	P	■	A	W	A	K	E	N		
N	U	T	S	H	E	L	L	■	M	A	L	E		
O	B	O	E	■	A	I	L	■	A	L	S	O		
B	E	R	N	■	R	E	S	■	S	E	E	N		

2	1	7	6	5	9	4	3	8
8	6	9	3	2	4	1	5	7
5	4	3	7	8	1	9	2	6
4	2	8	9	1	3	7	6	5
1	3	5	8	7	6	2	4	9
7	9	6	5	4	2	8	1	3
3	7	2	1	6	8	5	9	4
9	8	1	4	3	5	6	7	2
6	5	4	2	9	7	3	8	1

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:
Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Goulash in a Hurry

INGREDIENTS:
2 tbsp (25 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, minced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
3 thick lean, boneless pork loin chops, cut into thin strips
1 tbsp (15 ml) all-purpose flour
2 x 14-oz (398-ml) cans crushed tomatoes
1/2 cup (125 ml) extra-dry vermouth
2 tbsp (25 ml) paprika
1 tsp (5 ml) caraway seeds
1 tsp (5 ml) sugar
2 chicken bouillon cubes, crumbled
1 large green pepper, seeded and chopped
3 cups (750 ml) finely shredded red cabbage
Salt and fresh-ground black pepper

TO SERVE:
4 tbsp (60 ml) sour cream
Paprika
Fresh chives

METHOD:
1. Heat oil in large frying pan or pot over high heat. Add onion, garlic and pork, and sauté 3 minutes or until meat changes colour and becomes firm, and onion is slightly soft. Meanwhile, blend flour with 4 tbsp (60 ml) juice from canned tomatoes for a smooth paste; set aside.
2. Stir vermouth, paprika, caraway seeds and sugar into the frying pan. Add tomatoes, breaking them up as you mix. Stir in bouillon cubes and flour-and-tomato-juice mixture. Bring to boil, stirring, and boil until juices thicken.
3. Stir in green pepper and red cabbage until both are coated in cooking juices. Reduce heat, cover frying pan, and simmer 15 minutes or until meat is cooked and vegetables are crisp-tender.
4. Taste goulash and season with salt and pepper, if necessary. Ladle goulash into bowls and top each with spoonful of sour cream and a sprinkle of paprika. Garnish with chives and serve. **SERVES 4**

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
A pest needs a stronger cure. A friend's generosity will please someone. Attend get-togethers to increase your job chances.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
A tall man is overjoyed with a compromise. Friends will pitch in to get something done. No news really is good news.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
A weird mystery is solved by a liar. Try to discourage any rash decisions. You'll attract some compliments.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A zany friend complains of hustle and bustle. Pay attention to what isn't being said. Try something you've never done before.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
A man thrives in a seething condition. You can resist the pangs of sadness. Someone's whining provokes idle threats.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
A sophisticated woman accuses you of emotional detachment. Offer your services to help out. People are talking about a tempting offer.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
A happy-go-lucky guy makes a surprising confession. A notorious liar is being passive-aggressive. An apathetic person causes discomfort.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Somebody is still waiting for an answer. You'll justify buying a comforting toy. A stoical person gets the message that the time has come.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
A sentimental woman finds happiness. Weather creates relationship problems. A powerful person is on your side.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
A replacement becomes necessary. A moving statement causes excitement. Loving gestures will be made.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
An old-timer shoots down a useless theory. Take stock of what you need. You'll find the way to make dreams come true.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Be passionate about a just cause. Social events will slow to a crawl. A guilt trip can bring you good luck.

WORDY GURDY®

BY TRICKY RICKY KANE

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word.

1. One-liner about a Pepsi rival (1)
2. "French" potatoes' dimensions (1)
3. Seize a milk-and-ice-cream drink (1)
4. Dunks Doritos in salsa sauce (1)
5. Five-cent cucumber (2)
6. Cheddar or provolone binges (1)
7. Mall denizen's Burger King burgers (2)

ANSWERS
1. COKE JOKE 2. FRIES SIZE 3. TAKE SHAKE 4. DIPS CHIPS
5. NICKEL PICKLE 6. CHEESE SPREES 7. SHOPPERS WHOPPERS

3-10-09

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